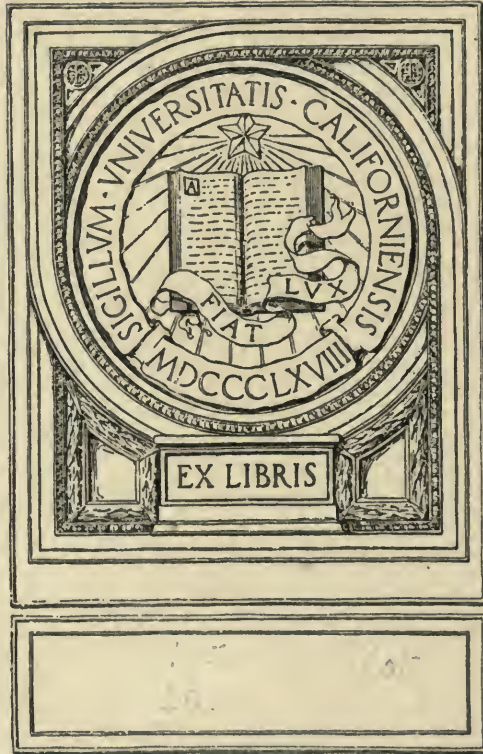
THE GLORY OF BELGIUM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THE GLORY OF BELGIUM

ILLUSTRATIONS IN COLOUR
BY
W. L. BRUCKMAN

HODDER AND STOUGHTON
LONDON · NEW YORK · TORONTO

Brussels — The Cathedral
of St. Gudule

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NOTE

IN the following pages I have attempted to give a sketch of some of the relics of mediæval Belgium, the wonderful Gothic churches and civic buildings that were to be seen before the present war. Although I have everywhere spoken of these monuments of old Flanders as still extant, unhappily in some cases the past tense will have to be substituted for the present. What remains unimpaired by the hand of time to-day may suffer destruction from the ruthless hands of the invading foe to-morrow. War always leaves its mark on a country, for, while time heals many of its wounds, the scars that it inflicts on old churches and other ancient buildings never can be healed. Egypt, Greece, Italy, Gaul—what storied country is there that has not felt the devastating breath of war? Reformers, Roundheads, Industrial Revolutionaries have between them wrought havoc on the antique towers and veteran battlements of Britain.

The architecture and the pictures, the poetry and the prose that illustrate the progress of Modern Belgium, much of it admirable as defining the Belgian nationality, are outside the scope of this book. Her mediæval relics constitute the real glory of Belgium. But Flemish art is so much the outcome of the

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commercial life of the country as to postulate a certain knowledge of the history of Flanders—this I have tried to supply, besides describing the old churches, palaces, town halls, and belfries, and a few of the pictures, devoting attention chiefly to the early masters, the Van Eycks, Memlincs and their school. In the writing of this sketch I have been greatly indebted to the help and advice of my friend Mr. Thomas Seccombe.

ROGER INGPEN.

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THE STORY OF BELGIUM

A

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CHAPTER I

THE STORY OF BELGIUM

WHAT picture does the mention of Belgium conjure up in our memory? Do we not think of that land of old Flemish towns, with their waterways and quaint houses; of cities with beautiful town halls and interesting churches; of the Forest of Ardennes with the laughter of Rosalind and Touchstone ringing through its leafy groves, and the moral precepts of the melancholy Jacques; of the art of Van Eyck, Memlinc, Rubens and Van Dyck; of Baldwin of the Iron Hand; Duke John I. of Brabant, the knight-errant, poet and the patron of troubadours, and other heroes.

The Belgian nation is something tangible, but one cannot think of a Belgian race, composed as it is of Walloon, Fleming and French. Each of its provinces and cities was in the past, and still is, proud of its individual liberties, traditions and character. In the past these provinces have found it expedient from time to time to sink their differences and to combine in order to protect some common interest, and union has during its later history been its watchword. The story of Flanders, using the term to describe these provinces which we now know as Belgium, can best be told by relating the story of some of its principal towns. This

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chapter supplies merely a sketch of the general history of the country.

The geographical boundaries of Flanders have shifted from time to time as her powerful neighbours Germany and France endeavoured, and sometimes managed, to annex portions of her territory. Her opulence and her position—conveniently wedged between the Neustrian or French dominions and the Germanic realms—offered a tempting reward to the invader, and her history shows that not only did she on many occasions fight for her national existence, but she had frequently to contend with border forays.

The primitive architecture of Flanders in the few examples that have survived, naturally show Romanesque influences, and the early Gothic is generally the outcome of contact with France and Germany. But from the eleventh to the fifteenth century Flemish architecture, and especially that of the civic buildings, displays bold national characteristics. The town halls and palaces belonging to that period are among the great art treasures of Flanders. Flemish painting came to its first flower with the work of the Van Eycks in the later years of the fourteenth and the earlier years of the fifteenth centuries, and it continued to flourish, with a few barren periods, till the death of Van Dyck.

The history of the Flemish people may be said to begin with the Roman invasion, after which the country remained practically undisturbed until the fifth century, when it was invaded by the Salic Franks under Clovis, on their way to Paris, Soissons and other great cities of France. These hordes laid the land waste, and destroyed

not only the people but every vestige of civilisation. What remained of the population lapsed into barbarism, and continued in that condition during the Frankish or Teutonic occupation. This period of the history of what we now know as Belgium has been told in the old chronicles, which are mainly a pleasing medley of Christian legend and romance.

The civilising influence of Charlemagne, King of the Franks, in the early years of the ninth century, extended to the Low Countries, which formed a part of his vast empire. His policy of government was to establish order and to spread Christian culture, but his successors were unable to continue his work, and the empire became dismembered after his death. The western provinces, including Flanders, became, by the Treaty of Verdun in 843, a portion of the Neustrian, afterwards the French dominions, while Brabant was retained as a part of the Roman-German Empire. With development of the Feudal system in the tenth century, Flanders was partitioned into the following provinces under the rule of hereditary princes: Flanders (East and West), Artois, Hainault, Namur, Brabant, Limburg, Liége, Antwerp and Malines. By the eleventh century these feudal lords were throwing off their allegiance to the sovereign power. In the meantime the towns of Flanders were developing into great centres of commercial prosperity, and with the extension of their wealth they gradually attained in their turn independence from the ruling counts. But these rights were only secured after many fierce struggles with the seigneurial lords, and

against a common enemy, France. In the early days of these contests for freedom the cities of Bruges and Ghent were among the richest in Europe, were largely instrumental in securing these much-coveted rights, but nominally Flanders remained under the dominion of the counts. The rise of Bruges, and later of Ghent, to positions of the first importance as commercial cities in the North of Europe, was largely due to the development of the canal system, which was introduced in the twelfth century. By these waterways inland towns obtained security from the aggression of ocean foes, and gained the trading advantages of a seaport. With the silting up of the rivers, however, towards the end of the fourteenth century, the commerce of Bruges and Ghent began to wane.

In the year 1383, when the male line of the Counts of Flanders became extinct, the country was united to Burgundy by Philip the Bold, who had married a daughter of a Flemish Count. Later, the other provinces of the Netherlands came under Burgundian rule; the people entered on a period of oppression, and lost many of their civil rights. But the country continued to prosper, and the arts flourished under the patronage of the Dukes of Burgundy, who maintained courts of great splendour. Painters, architects, and goldsmiths flourished, and were encouraged by the dukes to produce their finest work, witness the appointment of Jan van Eyck, one of the earliest Flemish artists, as Painter to the Court.

The short Burgundian rule came to an end in 1477, on the death of Charles the Bold at the Battle of Nancy. His daughter, Mary of Burgundy, had married the

Archduke Maximilian, who, in 1493, became Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, and head of the ruling House of Germany. Maximilian's son, Philip, took to wife the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, but dying before his father, his son Charles V. (born in Ghent in 1500), succeeded his grandfather as the Emperor, King of Spain and ruler of the Netherlands. Thus the Netherlands was merged into the crown of Spain, and remained under Spanish rule until the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. During the reign of Charles V. Protestantism spread rapidly throughout the Netherlands, but on his abdication in 1555, his son Philip II., who succeeded him, took steps to stamp it out. He appointed the Duchess of Parma, his half-sister, Regent, and Granvella, Bishop of Arras, as her counsellor. His attempts proving ineffective, he availed himself of the assistance of the Inquisition, which was introduced in 1550, and adopted the extreme measure of dispatching the Duke of Alva with power to suppress the spread of the new religion. Let us turn to Motley for an account of this terrible page in the history of the Netherlands :—

'Fernando Alvarez de Toledo, Duke of Alva, was now in his sixtieth year. He was the most successful and experienced general of Spain, or of Europe. No man had studied more deeply, or practised more constantly, the military science. In the most important of all arts at that epoch he was the most consummate artist.

'He was born in 1508, of a family which boasted imperial descent. In 1530 he accompanied the Emperor in his campaign against the Turk. Charles,

instinctively recognising the merit of the youth who was destined to be the life-long companion of his toils and glories, distinguished him with his favour at the opening of his career. Young, brave, and enthusiastic, Fernando de Toledo at this period was as interesting a hero as ever illustrated the pages of Castilian romance. His mad ride from Hungary to Spain and back again, accomplished in seventeen days, for the sake of a brief visit to his newly married wife, is not the least attractive episode in the history of an existence which was destined to be so dark and sanguinary.

'On the whole, the Duke of Alva was inferior to no general of his age. As a disciplinarian he was foremost in Spain, perhaps in Europe. As a statesman he had neither experience nor talent. As difficult of access as Philip himself, he was even more haughty to those who were admitted to his presence. He addressed every one with the deprecating second person plural. Possessing the right of being covered in the presence of the Spanish monarch, he had been with difficulty brought to renounce it before the German Emperor. He was of an illustrious family, but his territorial possessions were not extensive. Ten years before his arrival in the Netherlands he was supposed to have already increased his income to forty thousand a year, by the proceeds of his investments at Antwerp.

'In person the Duke of Alva was tall, thin, erect, with a small head, a long visage, lean yellow cheeks, a dust complexion, black bristling hair, and a long sable-silvered beard, descending in two waving streams upon his breast. Such being the design, the machinery was

Louvain — South-west Tower
of Cathedral

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well-selected. The best man in Europe to lead the invading force was placed at the head of ten thousand picked veterans. They were the first who carried muskets, a weapon which much astonished the Flemings when it first rattled in their ears. The musketeers, he observed, might have been mistaken for princes, with such agreeable and graceful arrogance did they present themselves.

'The Duke embarked upon his momentous enterprise on the 10th of May, at Carthagena. Before the middle of August they had reached Thionville, on the Luxemburg frontier, having on the last day marched a distance of two leagues through a forest which seemed expressly arranged to allow a small defensive force to embarrass and destroy an invading army. No opposition, however, was attempted, and the Spanish soldiers encamped at last within the territory of the Netherlands, having accomplished their adventurous journey in entire safety and under perfect discipline.

'The Duchess had in her secret letters to Philip contrived to express her disapprobation of the enterprise thus committed to Alva. She also wrote personally to the Duke imploring, commanding, and threatening, but with equally ill success. Alva knew too well who was sovereign of the Netherlands now, his master's sister or himself.

'Upon the 16th of February 1568 a sentence of the holy office condemned *all the inhabitants* of the Netherlands *to death* as heretics. From this universal doom *only a few persons, especially named*, were excepted. A proclamation of the King, dated ten days

later, confirmed this decree of the Inquisition, and ordered it to be carried into instant execution, without regard to sex, age, or condition. This is probably the most concise death-warrant that was ever framed. Three millions of people—men, women, and children—were sentenced to the scaffold in three lines.

'Under this new decree the executions certainly did not slacken. Men in the highest and the humblest positions were daily and hourly dragged to the stake. Alva, in a single letter to Philip, coolly estimated the number of executions which were to take place immediately after the expiration of Holy Week at "*eight hundred heads*." Many a citizen, convicted of a hundred thousand florins, and of no other crime, saw himself suddenly tied to a horse's tail, with his hands fastened behind him, and so dragged to the gallows. But although wealth was an unpardonable sin, poverty proved rarely a protection. Reasons sufficient could always be found for dooming the starveling labourer as well as the opulent burgher. To avoid the disturbances created in the streets by the frequent harangues or exhortations addressed to the bystanders by the victims on their way to the scaffold, a new gag was invented. The tongue of each prisoner was screwed into an iron ring, and then seared with a hot iron. The swelling and inflamation which were the immediate result prevented the tongue from slipping through the ring, and of course effectually precluded all possibility of speech.'[1]

[1] Alva's contemporary Grotius states that 100,000 genuine martyrs suffered death in the Netherlands for conscience' sake. Gibbon declared

The outcome of Alva's campaign, was the successful revolt of the United Netherlands, and the establishment of the independence of the northern states as the Dutch Republic, now the kingdom of Holland. The southern provinces which now form Belgium were won back to Catholicism and Spain largely owing to the military genius and conciliatory spirit of Alexander Farnese, Duke of Parma, by far the most successful of Philip II.'s proconsuls. Louis XIV. was constantly nibbling at the Belgian cities on the French frontier, but in 1713 most of them were restored, and a barrier of fortresses was established by English and Dutch intervention as a protection against the aggressive ambition of Belgium's southern neighbour. At the same time the sovereignty of the Catholic or southern Netherlands was transferred to Austria, and remained Austrian down to the French Revolution.

Under this rule the Netherlands enjoyed some prosperity, broken by the short Brabant revolution in 1789, but the country was regained the following year, and held by Austria till 1794, when it was taken by Republican France. In 1814 the French were cleared out ; then came Waterloo, and Belgium and Holland were united as the kingdom of the Netherlands. By the revolution of 1830 Belgium secured her independence, and Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, the widower of our Princess Charlotte (Queen Victoria's 'Uncle Leopold'),

that this number, executed in a single province and a single reign, far exceeded that of the primitive martyrs in the space of three centuries and of the Roman Empire. Wilde and Block contend that these figures are exaggerated, and that they need the elision of at least one cipher.

as her first king. My reason for giving this long quotation from Motley's great work is because this tragic story of the massacre of an inoffensive people has been repeated to-day with even worse barbarities. The great tribulation under which this beautiful country suffers at the time of writing these words, finds a parallel in its 'frightfulness' during the period of Alva's terror. These brave people are bearing their sufferings with a heroism worthy of their finest traditions, and proud we are to count them as our comrades-in-arms, and to offer hospitality to those who have been driven out of their country by a remorseless foe.

BRUGES

CHAPTER II

BRUGES

THERE is no town in Belgium that enables one to better realise the ancient life of Flanders than Bruges, which, unlike many of its neighbours, has escaped reconstruction, and is foremost among those cities that have preserved their mediæval characteristics. Its broad streets and old waterways, its ancient spires, bridges and gables, all invest it with a beauty unrivalled in its peculiar way, and have earned for it the name of the Venice of the North. No busy groups of traders now throng the streets, for the commerce of the town departed centuries ago. Till recently one could hardly find the usual signs of modern life, and the absence of those indications of prosperity enhance the attractions which Bruges possesses in a unique measure. It is said that about two-thirds of the population of the town are paupers, and no doubt its poverty has been the means of preserving for us its antiquity. One can well imagine what would have happened had the city developed into a modern manufacturing centre. Tall chimneys would have risen above the spires and gables, and smoke blackened the colouring of the brick-work and tiles of the houses, the canals would have become foul, and factories replaced the old houses. As it is, the people, and especially the children, seem fairly con-

tented. If Bruges is a little desolate, it is not out of character with the place, and if it reminds one of a glory that is past, it has preserved much of that glory.

Longfellow has picturesquely reviewed the ancient story of Bruges in his well-known lines :—

'Visions of the days departed, shadowy phantoms filled my brain ; . . .
All the Foresters of Flanders,—mighty Baldwin Bras de Fer,
Lyderick du Bucq and Cressy, Philip, Guy de Dampierre.
I beheld the pageants splendid, that adorned those days of old ;
Stately dames, like queens attended, knights who bore the Fleece of Gold ; . . .
I beheld the Flemish weavers, with Namur and Juliers bold,
Marching homeward from the bloody battle of the Spurs of Gold ;
Saw the fight at Minnewater, saw the White Hoods moving west,
Saw great Artevelde victorious scale the Golden Dragon's nest. . . .
Hours had passed away like minutes ; and before I was aware,
Lo ! the shadow of the Belfry crossed the sun-illumined square.'

It is said that St. Chrysolus preached at Bruges early in the third century. Six hundred years later Flanders suffered heavily from the hands of the Danes, the population was almost annihilated and few cities and villages of the country escaped destruction, but Bruges remained untouched, and even grew in prosperity.

The written records of Bruges, the capital of West Flanders, go back to the year 1280, and are extant almost without interruption till 1789, the outbreak of the French Revolution. The early history of the town belongs to legendary times, but we will start with Baldwin of the Iron Hand, the first Count of Flanders. Of his origin nothing is known, but the legend goes that

Bruges — Entrance to the Béguinage

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his support was obtained in a serious conflict with two Northern chieftains by Louis and Judith, the son and daughter of Charles the Bald, King of France. Judith, who was both beautiful and accomplished, had twice been married, first to the old King Ethelwolf of Wessex, and secondly to Ethelbald, a son of Ethelwolf by a former marriage. When he died in 860 she retired to France, where Baldwin saw and carried her away for his bride. Her father, King Charles, was so enraged at having been totally disregarded by the lovers that he speedily obtained their excommunication. But Judith and Baldwin fled from his displeasure to the court of Lothario, and from thence to Rome, where they sought the help of Nicholas II. The Pope listened to their story and promised to aid them by appealing to King Charles, but it was not until the Pontiff had written two letters to the king that he relaxed and promised to forgive the couple, who returned to France. Their marriage was celebrated with great splendour at Ausine, but the king would not consent to be present at the ceremony, though he conferred great honours on his son-in-law, Baldwin, who was appointed Count over the Northern 'Marches.'

At the confluence of the rivers Reye and Boterbeck, on the small oblong inland isle, the town of Bruges was founded. Whether the name was derived from *Brugge*, heather, or *brigge*, after the first bridge put across the river Reye at this point, is doubtful. But to this spot Baldwin and his wife came after they had made peace with King Charles. The place was not uninhabited, for it already contained a Bourg, a chapel built by

St. Amand and a church dedicated to the Saviour, said to have been erected by St. Eloi. Baldwin, however, built for himself a new Château or Bourg, in 865, on a piece of land then surrounded by water, and now marked by the canal of the Dyver. From Archbishop Ebber of Rheims he had received a gift of the relics of St. Donatian, and as the churches at Bruges had fallen into decay, he erected a chapel for their reception. The new Bourg afterwards became a Palace of the Counts of Flanders, and later was replaced by the Palais de Justice. To the chapel, when completed, Baldwin transferred the relics of St. Donatian, which became in time the old Cathedral, now no longer in existence.

The Reye has long been merged in the canals. In the early history of Bruges the river was busy with shipping from the town, which had steadily grown in commercial prosperity until the year 1200, when it ranked as the central mart of the Hanseatic league, which was represented by twenty-two important towns. Here were received the products of foreign countries—furs from Russia and wool from England—while the handicrafts of Flanders, including linen, lace and broadcloth, were sold for exportation. Second only to Venice in importance was Bruges in those prosperous days, and not counting the cities of Italy, it was the wealthiest in Europe.

Banks, consuls, and agents representing the principal cities of Europe had houses in Bruges, and the town was connected by canals with Ghent, Dunkirk and other important towns. Here the Counts of Flanders often made their residence in the fourteenth century, when

Bruges had reached the zenith of its fame. By this time wealthy merchants had erected those beautiful buildings, and were lavishing money in decorating them, which are now the glory of Bruges.

Under the rule of the Dukes of Burgundy Bruges reached the zenith of its prosperity: its population numbered some 200,000 souls. By the marriage of the daughter of Charles the Bold with the Emperor Maximilian in 1477 Flanders, the most opulent realm in Europe, became Austrian territory. Bruges as a centre of trade rapidly dwindled, and by the middle of the sixteenth century the city had seen its best days: the river Zwin was silting up and becoming unnavigable for the bigger class of shipping which was coming into use. The rise of commercial centres such as Antwerp, London, and Amsterdam, but above all the break up of the Hanseatic league, contributed to the decline of the town.

Bruges suffered during the War of the Spanish Succession, for the city was besieged by the Dutch. In 1794 it was taken by the French, who damaged many public buildings and churches and destroyed others.

The story of Baldwin of Constantinople is curious, and we will relate it, as he was the last descendant of Baldwin of the Iron Hand to rule over Flanders. A man of varied gifts, he busied himself with many things. He revised the tolls of Ghent and Bruges—giving the latter town permission to hold an annual fair—and he took upon himself to right some real abuses. Learning he encouraged, and himself wrote the chronicles of his country. But as a soldier he is best remembered.

After a successful war in France, by which he gained a part of the province of Artois, he decided to go to Constantinople to fight in the Holy Wars. In 1199 he was consecrated in the Church of St. Donatian, Bruges, and two years later he went forth as a Crusader to the East. Baldwin was present at the fall of Constantinople, and was raised by his own election to the dignity of Emperor of Rome. Baldwin's wife, who had followed him, never saw her husband again, for she died in Syria where she awaited him. Shortly after her death, Baldwin headed an expedition to Adrianople with the object of quelling a rising of the Greeks, and was believed to have perished before the walls of that city. But he had really been made a prisoner of the Bulgarians, and while in captivity was seen by a court lady who fell in love with him, and as he feigned to return the passion she managed to effect his escape at the risk of her own life. When he was free, however, he repented of his promise to make her his wife, and there is no doubt that he was responsible for her sudden death. He did not enjoy his freedom for long, as he was captured, carried off, and sold for a slave. After passing through many hands, he was released by some Germans who were touched by his story. Overcome with remorse for having basely taken the life of the Bulgarian lady who delivered him from bondage, he went to Rome and sought the Pope, who promised him absolution if he would submit to a life-long penance. Thereupon Baldwin went back to Flanders and concealed himself in the Forest of Glançon, where he lived the life of a hermit, and where he was discovered twenty years later

by some wood-cutters. He proved his identity, was acknowledged by his subjects, and what is more, by the neighbouring rulers, including Henry III. of England, who warned him against Louis, the French king. But his trials were not over. His daughter Jeanne, who had been dispossessed by his reappearance, refused to acknowledge him as her father, and she had gone into France. Paying no attention to Henry's counsel, he sought her there, and although the French king greeted him with friendliness, Baldwin suddenly realised he had fallen into a trap, from which he managed to escape before Louis could show his hand. He returned to Bruges, but Jeanne had outwitted him, and although he again fled, she secured him at last and had him hanged in chains at Lille between two hounds.

Even the most casual visitors to Bruges carry away at least one memory, the memory of the beautiful carillon from the ancient Belfry. The tower which holds these mellow chimes stands, as it were, like a sentinel over the city, while its bells remind the inhabitants of the passage of time. From a distance it serves as a landmark. As a place of observation the Belfry has had, and may still have, its value, for a very interesting and extensive view may be obtained from its summit of the surrounding country, the plains of Flanders, the rivers running down to the sea, and the roads to Antwerp, Ghent, and other important towns.

The privilege of setting up a bell-tower, primarily used as a place from which to summon the citizens to arms, was eagerly sought for by the folk of every rising town in Flanders, and the building of the Belfry at

Bruges marks an epoch in its history, as it did in that of any town so favoured. Standing in the Grand' Place or market square, and originally a structure of wood, it was superseded by the existing building, the lower portion of which dates from the year 1291. This base comprises a square tower of brick, in the Early Gothic style, of two stories with turrets and a balcony, from which the laws and decrees were read to the public. A niche over the doorway holds a modern figure of the Madonna and Child, the original having been destroyed during the French Revolution. The upper story, a graceful stone octagon added a century later, shows a less severe style of architecture than the lower part of the building, with its windows in the simpler form of an earlier period.

Longfellow has celebrated the bells in lines familiar to every one :—

> 'In the ancient town of Bruges,
> In the quaint old Flemish city,
> As the evening shades descended,
> Low and loud and sweetly blended,
> Low at times and loud at times,
> And changing like a poet's rhymes,
> Rang the beautiful wild chimes
> From the Belfry in the market
> Of the ancient town of Bruges.'

But these bells only date from 1680, though the Bourdon or great tocsin bell, weighing 19,000 lbs., which hangs in the upper open vaulted chamber of the tower, was originally in Notre Dame. The mechanism of the chimes was completed in 1748 and is very complicated. The Halles, an Early Gothic

building in the Grand' Place, forms a picturesque support for the stately Belfry which rises from its centre. Formerly occupied in part as a Cloth Hall for the display of woollen fabrics made in Bruges, Ghent and other towns, it is now used as municipal offices, a museum, and the meat market. In former days shipping came up as far as the Grand' Place, the cargoes of which were discharged under the shadow of the Belfry.

Many of the houses in the Grand' Place are old, and those that are modern have been designed in the old style. A large brick house, at the corner of the Rue St. Amand, with mullioned windows and a sign of the Golden Lion, called *Au Lion de Flandre*, is regarded as one of the best mediæval houses in Bruges. Charles II. of England is said to have lived here during his exile in 1656-7, but other authorities indicate the *Seven Turrets* in the Rue Haute as the house.

A short street leads from the Grand' Place to the Place du Bourg, the ancient centre of the town. It was here that Baldwin of the Iron Hand first built his Bourg, subsequently the Palace of the Counts of Flanders, and where he also founded a chapel to hold the relics of St. Donatian, later reconstructed as the Cathedral. Both the Palace and the Cathedral disappeared at the time of the French Revolution. But three ancient buildings, at least, of the greatest importance still remain on the south side of the Place du Bourg. The most imposing of these is the Hôtel de Ville, a fine example of Middle Gothic architecture. Belgium possesses many very beautiful mediæval town

halls; they vie in point of interest with her cathedrals, but she has few better specimens of civic architecture to show than the Hôtel de Ville at Bruges. The first stone of this building was laid in 1376 by Louis de Mole, Count of Flanders, and it was completed by about 1387. The front is occupied by six graceful windows which extend from within a few feet of the ground to the eaves of the roof, except that the lower part of the second window on either side is occupied by a Gothic door, which does not in the least affect the harmony of the façade. The high roof and twisted chimneys are partially hidden by a balustrade, from each end and the centre of which rises an elegant octagonal turret with a spire. At both ends and between the windows extending across the front are three tiers of niches containing statues. These figures, which were destroyed during the French Revolution, have been restored by modern Belgian sculptors. They represent on the lower row Biblical subjects, and above, the early rulers of Flanders. The interior is interesting chiefly on account of the Gothic roof of the Great Hall. A portion of the building is devoted to the town library, which contains 20,000 volumes and 600 manuscripts.

The Palais de Justice which stands on the north side of the Hôtel de Ville occupies the site of the Palace of the Counts of Flanders which was erected between the years 1520 and 1608, and was destroyed early in the eighteenth century. The present building dates from 1722-27 and is architecturally not very interesting. But it contains one object, saved from the

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old Palace, that is well worthy of attention, namely the fine Renaissance Chimney Piece, which fills up almost the entire side of the room. It was fashioned by Guyot de Beaugrant in 1511-31, and is believed to commemorate the defeat of the French at the battle of Pavia, and the peace of Cambrai, by which victory the Flemings secured a period of independence from French aggression. The base of the Chimney Piece is composed of black marble with a frieze in white marble depicting the history of Susanna. The upper part is of oak elaborately carved from designs by Lancelot Blondeel. The figures are nearly life-size. Charles V. occupies the central position with his paternal grandfather and grandmother on the left, Maximilian of Austria and Mary of Burgundy, and on the right his maternal grandparents, Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castille. The medallions held up by children on the right and left of Charles contain portraits of his parents, Philippe le Bel and Johanna of Castille. Some minor decorations, with foliage and coats of arms, complete this beautiful work of art, which was carefully restored in 1850 by Geerts.

The building on the left of the Town Hall is the Ancien Greffe, now one of the law courts, but formerly the depository of the municipal records. Built in 1537, the date which it bears, it was restored in 1881-84, and lavishly decorated with gold. Emblematical figures adorn the gables, and above the lower windows are images of the Counts and Countesses of Flanders.

The Chapelle du Saint Sang, standing on the right

of the Hôtel de Ville, built in 1533, has a handsome Gothic façade, with six pointed windows above, and below a niche containing a figure of St. Leonard, patron of the Christian slaves in the hands of the Saracens. Adjoining, and at right angles, is a staircase and doorway richly ornamented and with niches containing figures of Crusaders and their Queens. The lower part of the chapel is the crypt of St. Basil, founded by Baldwin of the Iron Hand in 865, and rebuilt by Theodoric of Alsace in 1150. How this came about we will relate before describing the interior of the building.

Theodoric of Alsace became Count of Flanders in 1128, and after nearly twenty years of a beneficent rule, in 1147, at the time of the second Crusade, he resolved to go to the Holy Wars, the Emperor Conrad and Louis VII. of France being of the company. The Crusade bore little result, but Theodoric, like others who had gone to Palestine to fight the Saracens, desired to recover some sacred object and return with it for the veneration of his people. Theodoric had the fortune to receive from his kinsman, Baldwin, King of Jerusalem, a vial containing the water in which Joseph of Arimathea had washed the blood-stained body of Our Lord. The relic, enclosed in a crystal cylinder, was brought home to Bruges by Theodoric, who had received it from the Patriarch of Jerusalem, and on the journey it was placed in the special care of the count's chaplain. On arriving at Bruges in 1149 it was deposited in the old Chapel of St. Basil, which Theodoric rebuilt during the following year in order to provide a more fitting place to

enshrine the relic. Later in the fifteenth century a second and more elaborate chapel was built, where the Holy Blood is now preserved.

The Chapel is composed of two parts, the lower or crypt, built in 865 and rebuilt in 1150, to which reference has already been made, and the upper chapel, restored in 1824.

The heavy pillars and simple circular arches of the crypt show its early origin. The decorations and stained-glass windows in the upper chapel are mostly modern, and have special reference to the Sacred Blood. The side-chapel to the right is where every Friday and Sunday the Sacred Blood is exhibited. Modern windows represent St. Veronica showing the handkerchief which bears the features of the Saviour, and of St. Longinus the Centurion who pierced His side. Above the Chapel is the Museum of the Brotherhood, the depository for the heavy and richly ornamented silver-gilt reliquary, made in 1617, where the relic of the Sacred Blood is enshrined on certain great days. Ordinarily the Sacred Blood is shown in a simpler *châsse*. The room contains some portraits by P. Pourbus of members of the Confraternity of the Holy Blood, besides a collection of sacred pictures and triptychs.

Bruges was the centre of the Flemish arts in the fifteenth century. Jan van Eyck and Memlinc both lived here. Colard Manson, one of the great early printers, was established in Bruges; and Caxton, the first English printer, was a merchant in the town, and is supposed to have set up the types of the first English book either here or at Cologne.

Of the treasures of Bruges, it can show nothing finer than the pictures of Memlinc preserved in the Hospital of St. John. These matchless works of art, the most beautiful examples of Memlinc's work, are alone worthy of a pilgrimage to Bruges, and should be seen if everything else is neglected. Of Hans Memlinc, or Memling, little is known. His name even for long was believed to be Hamling owing to the misreading of an inscription on the frame of one of his pictures. The date and place of his birth have not been traced, but it is surmised that he was a native of Mayence or of some neighbouring German town, and that he was born about the year 1430. His art he is supposed to have learnt from Rogier van der Weyden, but this fact is uncertain. He probably settled in Bruges in his own house about the year 1478. His picture of the Mystic Marriage of St. Catherine bears the date 1479, and his other paintings in the Hospital are undoubtedly later. Memlinc, who was a man of position and wealth, died at Bruges in 1495.

The Hospital, which was founded towards the end of the twelfth century, is under the Augustinian rule, and in this building the sick are looked after by the brothers and nurses. The mediæval customs of the institution have been preserved, as well as the fabric of the long red brick building with its Gothic arches, dating from not later than the thirteenth century. In the picture gallery of the Hospital on a rotary pedestal stands the reliquary of St. Ursula, a *châsse* of Gothic design with six of Memlinc's paintings illustrating the life of the Saint. The Hospital having acquired a relic

of St. Ursula, namely an arm, for which a reliquary was prepared, Hans Memlinc was commissioned to decorate it about the years 1480-89.

There was a tradition that Memlinc was a soldier who, returning from the wars, settled down at Bruges as a painter. Thackeray, who liked to believe this story, wrote: 'And Hans Memlinc at Bruges! Have you never seen that dear old Hospital of St. John, on passing the gate of which you enter the fifteenth century? I see the wounded soldier still lingering in the house, and tended by the kind grey sisters; his little panel on its easel is placed at the light, he covers his board with the most wondrous, beautiful little figures, in robes as bright as rubies and amethysts. I think he must have a magic glass in which he catches the reflections of the little cherubs, with many coloured wings, very little and bright; angels in long crisp robes of white come and flutter across the mirror, and he draws them.'

The picturesque legend of St. Ursula shall be told from Mrs. Jameson's version of the old legend, as it has been handed down to us, without attempting, as many have done, to reduce it to probability. Some have endeavoured to prove that XI.M.V. stands, not for eleven thousand, but for eleven Martyr Virgins, and that the story is an allegory. Once upon a time there reigned in Brittany a certain Christian king named Theonotus, who had an only daughter named Ursula. Her mother died while she was a girl of fifteen, but she was able, owing to her gifts, graces and learning, to fill the vacant place of the queen at the court. The princess was

not only very beautiful, but she was pious, humble, charitable and beloved by every one. Many of the neighbouring princes desired to marry her, but she did not wish to marry, and she refused them one and all. At last there came from England, a country at that time still in the darkness of paganism, tidings of a brave and handsome young prince named Conan, whose father, King Agrippinus, hearing of the fame of Ursula, had sent his ambassador to demand her in marriage for his son. The King of Brittany was embarrassed at the mission of the ambassador, for he knew that his daughter had taken the vows of chastity, and he feared to offend the English king. He therefore delayed his answer by entertaining and lodging him sumptuously. While he sat considering what he should do, the princess entered, and on learning the cause of his melancholy, she promised to reply to the ambassador herself. On the following day, while seated on a throne by her father's side, she said: 'I thank my lord the King of England and Conan his princely son, and his noble barons and you, sir, his honourable ambassador, for the honour you have done me, so much greater than my deserving. I hold myself bound to your king as to a second father, and to the prince his son as to my brother and bridegroom, for to no other will I ever listen. But I have to ask three things. First, he shall give for me as my ladies and companions ten virgins of the noblest blood in his kingdom, and to each of these a thousand attendants, and to me also a thousand maidens to wait on me. Secondly, he shall permit me for the space of three years to honour my virginity,

and, with my companions, to visit the holy shrines where repose the bodies of the saints. And my third demand is, that the prince and his court shall receive baptism; for other than a perfect Christian I cannot wed.' Now Ursula thought in her heart in making these conditions that the king would not grant them, but if he did, the eleven thousand virgins would be dedicated to the service of God. When the ambassador returned to his country he reported of the princess in terms of such praise that the King of England did not regard the conditions too hard of securing such a prize for his son. Prince Conan was moreover deeply in love with the lady and willing to be baptized: his father therefore sent forth an appeal to the virgins of noble blood and the maidens in his dominions to wait on the Princess Ursula, and soon the required number of ladies was obtained. When they arrived at the court of King Theonotus she wrote to the prince that as he had complied with her conditions she would receive him. The prince hastened to the princess, who said, 'Sir, my gracious prince and consort, it has been revealed to me in a vision that I must depart hence on my pilgrimage to Rome.'

Conan promptly assented, and she thereupon repaired with her attendants to Cologne, where she had a vision of an angel who bid her go on a pilgrimage to Rome. So she took ship with her company of maidens down the Rhine to Basle, where the pilgrims disembarked and continued their journey, crossed the Alps and made their way to the walls of Rome. But the Pope, St. Cyriacus, on hearing of their arrival, went

forth with his clergy to meet them, and caused tents to be put up for them outside the walls, so that they should not enter the city, where harm might come to them. Prince Conan, having arrived at Rome by another route on the same day as Ursula, was also received by the Pope, who baptized and gave him the name of Ethercus. In the course of time Ursula and her attendants decided to return home, and Pope Cyriacus with his cardinals and other prelates set out to accompany them. On arriving at Cologne they found the town in the occupation of the Huns, who had invaded the country and spread destruction and ruin everywhere. The hordes of these barbarians at once fell upon the holy travellers and killed them. Conan was one of the first to fall, then they slew the Pope, the cardinals, bishops and the rest of the clergy ; finally they killed all the virgins excepting St. Ursula, whom they saved on account of her beauty. On taking her before their king, he would have made her his wife, but she would not hear of it, and so he killed her himself, piercing her with three arrows from his bow. The relics of the eleven thousand virgins are preserved at Cologne, where are also most of the bones of St. Ursula.

The subjects of the six panels decorating the shrine of St. Ursula illustrate the following scenes in her life: (1) St. Ursula, arriving at Cologne in the ships with her maidens, prepares to land. The Cathedral is shown in the background, and above from a window the angel who bid St. Ursula take the pilgrimage to Rome. (2) St. Ursula has landed at Basle, while her companions

Bruges — Porte Maréchale

[illegible] and guard unto [illegible] the walls, so that they [illegible] might come to [illegible] arrived at Rome by [illegible] as Ursula, was also [illegible] baptised and gave him the [illegible] course of time Ursula and [illegible] return home, and Pope [illegible] and other prelates as well [illegible] On arriving at Cologne they [illegible] occupation of the town, who [illegible] and special destruction and [illegible] hordes of these barbarians [illegible] travellers and killed them. [illegible] to say, then they slew the [illegible] and the rest of the clergy [illegible] virgins excepting St. Ursula, [illegible] of her beauty. On taking [illegible] he would have made her his [illegible] of it, and so he killed [illegible] Some arrows from [illegible] virgins [illegible] of the [illegible]

[illegible]

(2)

[illegible]

are about to disembark. (3) The Pope with his attendants, bishops, etc., receiving St. Ursula at Rome. In the corner of the picture Prince Conan and other neophytes are being baptized. (4) St. Ursula with her maidens and the Pope embarking, and in the ship on its way to Basle. (5) In the background the camps of the Huns are seen on the shores of the Rhine—the virgins and knights are being attacked by the barbarians. (6) The Martyrdom of St. Ursula who, in the attitude of prayer, receives the arrows of the barbarian king. At one end of the casket is a panel of St. Ursula protecting some young girls beneath her cloak as the patron saint of maidens. The panel at the other end, Our Lady beneath a porch, worshipped by two nuns of the hospital.

In the Hospital of St. John is also to be seen near the window a triptych by Memlinc, which was commissioned by Brother Jan Floreins, and painted in 1479. This is his most beautiful altarpiece, the colours of which are very rich. 'The Adoration of the Magi' is the subject of the central panel. Our Lady's face is placid and rather wooden, as is frequently the case in early Flemish paintings, but the child is charming. The old king is kneeling at the feet of the infant Christ (who is seated on His mother's knees), having presented his gift to Joseph, who stands with it in the background. The middle-aged king to the left is kneeling and waiting to offer his gift, and the young king, an Ethiopian, stands to the right and holds his gift in his hand. An open window at the back of Our Lady admits the light, and a glimpse of a charming little view. The figures

on the left of the picture are the donor, Jan Floreins, with the book, and his brother behind. The man at the right looking through the window is said to be Memlinc himself. The subject of the right panel is the 'Presentation in the Temple.' Our Lady, with St. Anna, offering the child to St. Simeon, and St. Joseph in the background. The figure of the Blessed Virgin is graceful and the folds of her drapery very good, also the architecture of the Temple with the little view of the street through the open door. The left panel represents the birth of Christ in the stable, which is part of a ruined building. Our Lady with two angels are in kneeling positions of adoration before the child, who lies at their knees. St. Joseph stands in the background looking down at the child, with an ass and a cow at his side. The most interesting figure in the picture is that of St. Joseph. The outside panels consist of single figures—on the right St. John the Baptist with a lamb, and left St. Veronica with handkerchief bearing the features of Our Lord.

In the same room is Memlinc's triptych for the high altar of the Church of the Hospital. The subject is the mystic marriage of St. Catherine. Dr. Waagen describes this work as follows: 'The Virgin is placed in the centre, on a seat under a porch, with tapestry hanging down behind it: two angels hold a crown, with much grace, over her head: beside her kneels St. Catherine, her head one of the finest by Memlinc, on whose finger the beautiful infant Christ places a ring of betrothal; behind her is a charming figure playing on the organ; and further back St. John the Baptist, with

a lamb at his side. On the other side kneels St. Barbara, reading; behind her another angel holds a book to the Virgin; and still deeper in the picture is St. John the Evangelist, whose figure is of great beauty, and of a mild and thoughtful character. Through the arcades of the porch we look out, at each side of the throne, on a rich landscape, in which are represented scenes from the lives of the two St. Johns. The panel on the right side contains the beheading of the Baptist and at a distance a building, with a glimpse into the landscape, in which are again introduced events from the life of the saint. On the left is St. John the Evangelist on the Island of Patmos, about to write in a book, and looking upwards, where the vision of the Apocalypse appears to him—the Lord, on a throne, in a glory of dazzling light, encompassed with a rainbow. In a larger circle are the host of the Elders, with a solemn character of countenance, in white garments, and with harps in their hands; opposite to them, among flames and mystic forms, is the four-headed beast. Below all is a landscape, in which men are fleeing, and seeking to conceal themselves among the rocks, whilst the four horsemen, in the swiftness of their might, are bursting on them. Finally, the sea, with its deep green crystal waves, reflects the entire subject, the rainbow, the glow of the sky, the mystic figures, and the forms on the shore, and thus unites these various objects into one great whole. On the outside of the wings are four saints, two male and two female, and kneeling before them are men and women in religious vestments. The whole forms a work strikingly poetical, and most

impressive in character; it is highly finished, both in drawing and in its treatment as a picture.'

Of the many churches in Bruges it is necessary only to describe two or three. After the old Cathedral, which originally stood in the Place du Bourg, had been destroyed by the French at the time of the Revolution, the relics were taken to the Church of St. Sauveur, which was erected into the Cathedral. This is a large building of brick constructed between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries, on the site of an older church dedicated to St. Eloi, and dating from 625. The Cathedral possesses two handsome decorated windows in the north and south transepts, and an imposing square tower rises from the western end, the lower portion of which was built in the twelfth, and the upper stage added in the nineteenth century. The effect of the interior is striking, but the black and white marble rood screen, enclosing the choir, put up in 1682, is unpleasing. Some fine effects of the building can, however, be obtained if viewed from various points—for example, from the north transept. The Chapel of the Holy Sacrament contains the beautiful white marble Madonna and Child by Michael Angelo. The modelling of this group is very delicate; the design is said to be characteristic of the great Italian master. The pictures are interesting and well worth attention.

The Church of Notre Dame belongs to about the same period as the Cathedral, and, like it, it stands on the foundations of an older church built in 744, and dedicated to St. Boniface. The tower, which rises to a height of 390 feet, was restored in the middle of the

last century, and provided with the turrets in 1873. The beautiful Late Gothic porch called 'Het Paradys' has been walled up and converted into the baptistery: it can only be entered from the inside of the church. A black marble screen with crucifix and a figure of Our Lady cuts off the choir as in the Cathedral. The chapel in the south ambulatory to the left contains the mausoleum of Charles the Bold, slain at the battle of Nancy in 1477, and his only child Marie, wife of the Emperor Maximilian of Austria, who died in her 25th year through a fall from her horse while hunting in 1482. These recumbent figures in gilt copper are life-size and are both on black marble tables. Mary's monument was executed by Jan de Beckere in 1495, by order of her son Philip le Beau. She wears the crown of Austria, and at her feet are two dogs. Charles is clad in armour; at his feet lie his helmet and gauntlets. His remains were conveyed here on September 20, 1550, from Nancy by the direction of his grandson, Philip II., who in 1558 erected the monument which was the work of Jonghelinck.

The small but choice collection, in the Académie des Beaux-Arts, contains some pictures that were formerly in the now demolished Cathedral of St. Donatian and other churches of Bruges. The altarpiece, by Jan van Eyck, was commissioned by George van der Palen for the high altar of St. Donatian. The portrait of the donor on the right—an elderly priest with puffy face, holding his dumpy little office-book and eyeglasses in his cramped old hands—is excellent. The figure of St. Donatian, in a handsome cope, is also fine; but the

Child and His Mother are not very attractive, neither is the St. George, who smiles feebly, standing behind Van der Palen, and presents him to Our Lady. The architecture, the throne on which the Virgin is seated, the garments, the carpet and flooring, are details put in most carefully, and very characteristic of the painter's method. Jan van Eyck's portrait of his wife, a typical piece of work, hangs near the altarpiece. Memlinc's triptych of St. Christopher was painted for William Moreel, a prosperous man of good family from Savoy, who had made his home in Bruges. The saint is represented in the central panel, wading through the waters with the Christ-Child perched on his shoulder. On his left is St. Maurens as a Benedictine, and on his right St. Giles as a hermit. The left panel contains the figure of the donor, William Moreel, kneeling with his five sons, and protected by his patron saint, St. William. The right panel shows Moreel's wife, with her patroness St. Barbara, and her daughters. The Museum contains two notable pictures by Gerard David, described by Max Rooses as the last great painter of the old school of Bruges. David was by birth a Dutchman, born at Oudendter about 1460, and died in 1523. Although he attained great fame during his lifetime, his name had become so entirely obscured, that fifty years ago not a single one of his pictures bore his name. 'The Punishment of the Unjust Judge' forms the subject of two panels, which were ordered by the Magistracy of Bruges. They illustrate the story from Herodotus, of the flaying of Sisamnes, a judge in Persia, who was punished in this fashion for accepting a bribe. The

other work by David is the triptych depicting the 'Baptism of Christ.' This was executed between the years 1502 and 1508 for Jean des Trompes, Treasurer of the city of Bruges. It was formerly in the Church of St. Basil. Our Lord stands in the river, which reaches to His knees; St. John Baptist, the patron of the donor, kneels on the right bank and pours the water on the head of the Saviour, whose clothes are guarded by an angel on the left in a richly embroidered cope. The execution of the principal figures is dignified and reverent, and this fine picture displays the artist's great gifts. The background is filled in with a landscape, a miniature town in the distance, and some other interesting details.

Antwerp — The Cathedral

ANTWERP

CHAPTER III

ANTWERP

ANTWERP is marked out by geography as clearly as London to be a great commercial centre. Its history has been a showing of how ingeniously the perversity of man may thwart the dictates of Nature. Like London, Antwerp is on a smooth tidal stream at an important point of junction (where Schyn and Lea join as tributaries) about sixty miles from the sea. Built on the banks formed by the junction of Schyn and Scheldt, Antwerp was a choice prey to the Danes, who burnt the Bourg in 835. The earliest glimpse of Antwerp's commercial relations is caught in the time of Godfrey de Bouillon and the First Crusade, when Antwerp's ships are mentioned besides those of Bruges as appearing off the Syrian coasts. But its great prosperity began about the time of our Edward III. This king stayed there at length in 1338-39, and one of his sons, Lionel, was born there. He used it as a base against the French, treated there with Van Artevelde, and coined money there. Later, from Brabant Antwerp passed under Burgundian rule, showing much less restiveness generally than the industrial cities of Flanders. But the epoch of Antwerp's greatness began with the Joyous Entry of Charles V. in February 1515. In

commerce, said Guicciardini, it headed all the cities of the world. Trade was becoming oceanic. Genoa and Venice, Bruges and Ghent were eclipsed, London's greatness had hardly dawned. All the great trading houses, except the Spanish and Hanseatic merchants, had deserted Bruges for the new Portus Magnus by 1516. Antwerp became not merely the commercial but the financial metropolis of Europe. The Fuggers were the Rothschilds of the city, and all the crowned heads of Europe borrowers.

The city was strongly fortified by order of Charles V., and forts and gates illustrated the poliorcetic art of the age to perfection—the plan too was enlarged to contain a quarter of a million inhabitants, greatly increased no doubt at the periodic fairs at Whitsun and Assumptiontide. Very little, alas ! is left of that Antwerp now save the Steen and St. Mary's, where the author of *Utopia* saw his friend Peter Giles talking to a seaman called Ralph Hythlodaye.

The religious troubles were impending. Anabaptists, Iconoclasts, Calvinists, Catholics fell upon the town in succession and rent it to pieces. Philip II., after opening a Chapter of the Golden Fleece at St. Mary's in March 1556, determined to mend the seamless garment of the Church. The great commercial centre hated having a bishop put over it, and the Beggars and Protestant Preachers made many converts. The cry was raised, 'Rather Turks than Papists.' After much confusion Alva arrived on the scene in 1567, and the emigration of Protestants and of Antwerp's prosperity commenced simultaneously. Alva consumed over a

million on a citadel to overawe the city, he put many people to death and ruined far more by his fiscal arrangements—all to no purpose. The people were sympathetic with the rebels of Dutch, and the Spanish troops were mutinous.

Between these two fires Antwerp was consumed. The unpaid Spaniards sacked the city in November 1576, amid scenes of indescribable horror and the loss of about 7000 lives. The needs of Philip soon recalled these warriors to Italy or Spain, and the Protestants mastered the city, which was by the Prince of Orange entrusted in 1584 to Philip Marnix de St. Aldegonde as Burgomaster. St. Aldegonde prepared to defend Antwerp by water by means of the dykes.

Unfortunately the Kowenstein dyke was not cut, and this omission was fatal. The threatened siege by Parma, the greatest soldier of that age, on behalf of Philip II.—the siege which was to give Belgium back to Spain and Catholicism—began in 1585, and forms the central panel in Motley's great work on the United Netherlands. Motley is passionate, partial, prejudiced, but, like Macaulay, picturesque in a most permanent fashion. The Spaniards, inspired by their great leader, managed to save their guns from the flood. Parma blocked the river with a wonderful bridge, against which the besieged devised some most diabolical and destructive fireships. If the Kowenstein had been cut, Dutch vessels might have relieved the city in spite of the bridge, but Parma repaired bridge and dyke alike and held them with a signal tenacity. Two forts on the dyke were overpowered, but the courage of the Spaniards set up a

panic, and the Dutch, having lost 3000, left the mastery of the Kowenstein to Parma. A fortnight later Antwerp capitulated. The city was saved to art, history and Rome, but its commercial glory was at an end. As at Bruges, the grass grew in the streets. 'Magna civitas, magna solitudo,' wrote an English traveller. The architecture of the town shows that it only began to flourish when Bruges, Ypres and Ghent were already on the decline. But its very lack of prosperity protected its old-time look during the period from 1505, and the closure of the Scheldt until its restoration in the nineteenth century. It had a brief foretaste of revival, 1793-1815, and Napoleon would have made it his second capital. He it was who named it a pistol pointed at the heart of England. From 1600, for over two centuries, London and Amsterdam throttled Antwerp. No big vessels were allowed to pass the neck of the Scheldt at Flushing.

Antwerp has been a word to conjure with. Its vicissitudes have been enormous. Commercial as its modern fame is, it has been essentially a city of tragedy. Even among the cities of the Netherlands its history has been tragic. As a port of entry it was more renowned by our grandfathers than it has been by us. John Roby, the Lancashire traveller who perambulated Western Europe in the first year of Queen Victoria's reign, thus preambles on the town: 'Antwerp is an excessively fine, picturesque old city, and with one or two exceptions the most interesting in our route. The various and rich decorations of the houses built of stone, range after range, imparting an aspect of gorgeous magnificence to

the long narrow streets—so different from the flat, bare, window-staring frontage in the best thoroughfares of our own metropolis. I was much struck with the style and mixture of Gothic and Moresco, and could only compare it to the quaint, arabesque character of our old oak furniture as contrasted with the trim, smooth embellishments of the modern.

'Long cloaks and mantles are very common among the females. Ecclesiastics in flowing black garments, *i.e.* from the waist downwards—tight enough above, and a black sash round the middle ; great wide shoe-buckles, and that curious no-crowned hat, all brim nearly, which looks so ridiculous to a stranger. The Brabant head-dress of the females is a cap white as snow, with lappets in shape as in size almost like the flaps of a saddle. Then the canals, the stadt house and the Exchange.'

This exactly reproduces the kind of romance that Antwerp, so often the first city seen in the magic environment suggested by the word 'Abroad,' injected into the veins of our forefathers. Again :

'Evening was coming on as we stood before the great entrance to the Cathedral ! It is a prodigious, a wondrous mass of architecture. The spire . . . to describe it would be in vain—so light, so airy, so incorporeal. It mounts up like some heaven-devoted thing, that has bid farewell to earth and its cares for ever. The general character of the architecture is not unlike that of immense bundles of reeds tapering to a point. The ornaments, the fret work, so minute, so intricate and elaborate that one might almost fancy they are woven in lace.'

Built originally as a shrine for a miraculous image of the Virgin in the tenth or early eleventh century, the present Notre Dame (by courtesy only cathedral, for there is no see of Antwerp) dates mainly from the fourteenth or fifteenth century, and is near 400 feet long with six aisles. The northern tower alone is completed (1530), and ascends in a desultory way to 402 feet. The view over the waterways illustrating the great siege is very grand, and the carillon one of the biggest even in the Netherlands (99 bells). Taste has changed since Victoria was young, and we consider the church picturesque externally viewed from the Place Verte in the twilight, but otherwise cold, barnlike and unimpressive. There is a complete lack of mystery and all the more intimate beauty of Gothic about the church. The triforium seems to fail us. We admire details of altar and choir stalls, but for the most part regard the church mainly in the light of a picture gallery for the master works of Antwerp's great painter.

The 'Crucifixion' is a painting that stands by itself. When Rubens painted it he was dreaming of Michael Angelo. The drawing is harsh, violent and fierce, like that of the Roman school. All the muscles seem to protrude at the same time, all the bones and all the cartilages are in evidence, nerves of steel penetrate a flesh of granite. The bistre of Italy predominates easily over the carnations which the Antwerp painter habitually strews around with so lavish a hand. The hangmen are giants of elephantine proportion and countenances of bestial ferocity. Christ Himself shares in a similar exaggeration, and has the appearance rather of a Milo of

Lierre (near Antwerp) —
Béguinage

Built originally as a [illegible] for a [illegible] image of the Virgin in the [illegible] century, the present Notre [illegible] cathedrals [illegible] from the [illegible] feet long [illegible] The [illegible] great [illegible] [illegible] church [illegible] is [illegible] and all [illegible] beauty of Gothic about the [illegible] seems to fail us. We admire details of [illegible] walls, but for the most part regard the church mainly in the light of a picture gallery for the [illegible] works of Antwerp's great painter.

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Croton nailed and riveted to the cross by rival athletes rather than a Deity sacrificing himself voluntarily for the redemption of humanity. The only thing Flemish about the composition is a Snyders-like big dog which barks aloud to himself in a corner. A cognate exaggeration is not absent from the famous 'Descent from the Cross,' though this is admittedly one of the wonders of the painting world; and for the history of Flemish art, says Huet, this Descent possesses as much value as does Goethe's *Faust* for the history of German literature. Numerous legends have accumulated around this wonderful folding picture, which is shown so grudgingly and concealed like a Regalia. Ideas for it are said to have been drawn by the artist from Daniele da Volterra and Michael Angelo. Van Dyck is also said to have restored a portion of the picture, for which has been offered its weight in gold, and with the gold originally paid for which Rubens built his house. The guild of Arquebusiers paid. Theophile Gautier has woven a characteristic romance around the bounteous figure of the Madeleine in this picture. His hero, a blasé Parisian artist called 'Tiburce,' tired of the ordinary types of Parisian model, conceives a wholly imaginary blonde, abounding in vermilion with red-gold mane and generous outline. Despondent of finding her in Paris, he makes an expedition express to Brussels in the hope of meeting her there. The failure is complete. Wherever he turns he meets nothing but brunettes; Andalusians, Bohemiennes, Gypsies, Creoles, Hottentots even, all with hair the colour of ebony. He despairs of meeting the *Toison d'Or* of his quest even in Antwerp, when one afternoon

he sauntered nonchalantly into the cathedral. When the shutters of 'The Descent from the Cross' fell asunder Tiburce experienced a thrilling shock, just as if he had suddenly glimpsed into a crater of light. The sublime head of the Magdalen blazed in triumph in a golden sea. The dim, religious light that leaked into the cathedral from the lean Gothic windows was transfigured. It was a revelation for our hero. The scales fell from his eyes. He found himself face to face with the idol of his vision. The inexpressible elusive blonde of which he had so often dreamed was here before his eyes. The great master had anticipated his phantasy, had achieved his presentiment of a conceivable ideal. He recognised at once a Beauty which he had never cast eyes on before. What follows can only be told in the *ipsissima verba* of the famous, flamboyant 'gilet rouge.'

'Un pied du Christ, blanc d'une blancheur exsangue, pur et mat comme une hostie, flottait avec toute la mollesse inerte de la mort sur la blonde épaule de la sainte, escabeau d'ivoire placé là par le maître sublime pour descendre le divin cadavre de l'arbre de rédemption.—Tiburce se sentit jaloux du Christ.—Pour un pareil bonheur, il eût volontiers enduré la passion.—La pâleur bleuâtre des chairs le rassurait à peine. Il fut aussi profondément blessé que la Madeleine ne détournât pas vers lui son œil onctueux et lustré, où le jour mettait ses diamants et la douleur ses perles ; la persistance douloureuse et passionnée de ce regard qui enveloppait le corps bien-aimé d'un suaire de tendresse, lui paraissait mortifiante pour lui et souverainement injuste. Il aurait voulu que le plus imperceptible mouvement lui donnât

à entendre qu'elle était touchée de son amour ; il avait déjà oublié qu'il était devant une peinture, tant la passion est prompte à prêter son ardeur même aux objets incapables d'en ressentir. Pygmalion dut être étonné comme d'une chose fort surprenante que sa statue ne lui rendît pas caresse pour caresse ; Tiburce ne fut pas moins atterré de la froideur de son amante peinte.

'Agenouillée dans sa robe de satin vert aux plis amples et puissants, elle continuait à contempler le Christ avec une expression de volupté douloureuse, comme une maîtresse qui veut se rassasier des traits d'un visage adoré qu'elle ne doit plus revoir, ses cheveux s'effilaient sur ses épaules en franges lumineuses ;—un rayon de soleil égaré par hasard rehaussait la chaude blancheur de son linge et de ses bras de marbre doré ;—sous la lueur vacillante, sa gorge semblait s'enfler et palpiter avec une apparence de vie ; les larmes de ses yeux fondaient et ruisselaient comme des larmes humaines.'

Among picturesque churches in Antwerp other than the Cathedral, St. Jacques and St. Paul's are the most noteworthy. St. Jacques is a well-proportioned cruciform building, with a massive, unfinished western tower. It is in the Late Pointed with some flamboyant detail and ornament, including an altarpiece by Rubens. St. Paul's is a Dominican church, grand in proportion, with much florid and baroque ornament (including a dreadful Calvary) but with fine Renaissance details too, such as stalls and confessionals. Roberts's famous picture in the Tate Gallery renders the interior strangely familiar,

and it is certainly very typical of the overloaded seventeenth century Jesuit church of which one sees so many examples on the Continent. The choir was completed in 1621.

A matchless relic of the same period is the Plantin-Moretus Museum. Its silent cloister, which looks as if the history of the world which commenced about 1575 came to an end about 1650, is the famous Officina Plantiana whence issued so many folios and quartos printed in grand type on matchless paper, and adorned with woodcuts and engravings on copper. The workshops have been restored to their seventeenth century presentment by the enthusiastic work of Max Rooses, who has done for Antwerp much of what Pierre de Nolhac has done for Versailles. Plantin was expressly appointed Proto-Printer of the Netherlands in 1570. His daughter Martina married Jean Moretus, and father and son both employed the learned Justus Lipsius as editor. Plantin managed to survive both Spanish Fury and Siege, and died peacefully in 1589. His business manager, Moretus, produced and sold in the cramped little shop some remarkable books. After Jean Moretus the most distinguished of the dynasty was Balthazar I., the friend of Rubens, after which the firm's artistic eminence slowly evaporated. The old printing house and its priceless collections were sold to the city in 1876, largely through the instrumentality of the Duc D'Aumale. Since then the old house has been one of the greatest joys of Antwerp, which in its prosperity has lost so many of its historic purlieus and topographical and artistic treasures. Among other great printing exploits of

Antwerp must be reckoned the *Acta Sanctorum*, a work of the most extraordinary diligence and curiosity of research, set on foot by the Jesuit Father Rosweydus (d. 1629), John Bollandus and their disciples.

Half a generation older than the Plantin House is the Antwerp Town Hall. Cornelis Floris, a brother of the painter, planned it in 1561, and finished it in four years. The Gothic style kept up in most Flemish municipal halls is absent here. Antwerp was the first of the cities to break in civic architecture with the pointed arch. It is an Italian structure, ornamented in the style of the Bodleian quadrangle at Oxford, and adorned with some matchless chimney-pieces and some excellent modern historical paintings by Baron Leys. They are fine specimens of mediæval revival in painting, something after the manner of Abbey. A few of the renaissance houses in the Grand' Place are not unworthy of Brussels, Malines, Hildesheim or Nuremberg. But the picturesque old quay squalors and odorous marine ancientries of erstwhile Antwerp are now mostly things of the past. The city spreads every five years like a fan and outgrows its spacious boulevards. To most people passing through to-day it is arresting chiefly as the nursery of so many great masters. Quentin Matsys and Rubens were its faithful children. Van Dyck was something of a truant. Then came the famous Academy of 1664, with Jordaens, Breughel, Teniers and Quellin among its first professors.

Antwerp may be termed the metropolis of Quentin Matsys and Peter Paul Rubens, the early capital of Van Dyck, and the abiding city of many other masters,

especially disciples of Matsys such as Bosch and Breughel, and of Rubens such as Jordaens and Teniers. 'Rembrandt's treble' as he has been called, Frans Hals, was also an Antwerper by birth and education. Matsys, who died in 1530, concludes the first great era of Flemish art which began with the Van Eycks. Rubens begins and summarises another great period. The flaming sword—war, pestilence and famine, intervenes between the two epochs. It is wonderful that art should have survived. Flemish art would scarcely have done so on its own impulse, but the profound love and reverence for Italy came in and reinforced the native instinct.

Matsys, contemporary and acquaintance of the Emperor Maximilian, Thomas More, Holbein and Dürer, first brought repute to the Painters' Guild of Antwerp, and indeed conferred on that city that lead which had belonged hitherto to the cities of South Flanders. His father was a smith, but Venus refused to marry any but a painter or the son of a painter. Legend has greatly embroidered this tale. A plausible version tells that Quentin had a brother with whom he was brought up by his father, a smith, who held the lucrative post of clockmaker to the Council of Louvain. It came to be a question which of the sons should take the paternal office and which carve out a new profession for himself. Quentin became the painter.

He owed much to Dierick Bouts, who took to Louvain the combined art of Memlinc and Van der Weyden of Tournai.

Matsys seemingly is a primitive and a religious

painter, but it is a religion from which the mysticism is rapidly evaporating. Realist, portraitist, colourist, he is the first complete painter and absolute artist of Flanders: he is also the last of the pure Flemish painters, unconcerned with Italy. Some of his secular realistic pictures are at Paris, but his masterpieces are still at Antwerp—above all the 'Entombment,' ordered by the Joiners Guild in 1508. The 'dead Christ is a marvel of correct drawing and colour; the other figures are dressed in festive garments of a dazzling splendour, somewhat out of place in the scene of mourning. The tenderest gradations of tone blend harmoniously with the most rare and brilliant colours. The breadth of the brushwork is astounding: the features of the face are no longer drawn, but carefully modelled, and here and there a little blurred. The painter has renounced the method of the primitives, whose paintings were completed with enamelling; he accentuates his brushwork; he amuses himself by mixing and fusing his colours; he delights in making them shimmer and sparkle, but he also cunningly opposes the brilliance of variegated colours to the cold pallor of the corpse, and this powerful livid passage is made to dominate the effervescent confusion of tones. Finally, in his backgrounds, where nature and life are treated as minutely as among the most skilful of his forerunners, he proves that he can paint with as much delicacy as the miniaturists of the past.' When he died in 1530 Master Quentin was a personage of European celebrity. He extracted all the honey from the old school and its exemplars, and represents

the essence of the old Flemish manner at the maximum of its power.

Nearly a hundred years were to elapse before another great Flemish School was to emerge under Rubens. This master was an Antwerpian, born in Westphalia in June 1577. From nine to fourteen he was sent by his widowed mother to the Latin school at Antwerp, but he soon began earning, first as page and then as painter's apprentice. His real master was Otto Venius (Van Veen), whose influence is apparent in all his early works: a nobleman, a man of the world, a man of intellect. Already he was a Crichton, and his life henceforth seems one steady triumphal procession.

At three-and-twenty he goes to Italy, and has not been there a twelvemonth when he obtains an excellent position at the court of the Duke of Mantua. When, seven years later, he returns to Antwerp, he finds work immediately, and as immediately his reputation is established by that work. The father had ruined himself and his, the son restores the fortunes of the family. He becomes a worshipped husband, an honoured citizen, an acclaimed master. When death destroys his domestic happiness, he contracts a second marriage, as blessed as the first. Through his intercourse with the small court at Brussels, he develops the gift of diplomacy, and a happy aptitude in that respect overcomes the prejudices of princes and ministers alike. Painting and conversing in turns, he gains the friendship of the Kings of England and of Spain, who load him with distinctions. Towards the year 1635, he is already in the position of a

Malines — La rue de la
Boucherie

millionaire, an English knight, acknowledged *maître d'école.*

But these smooth waters of prosperity had, nevertheless, their depths. A moderation such as from the beginning to end we see displayed in Rubens's ambition is not obtained or maintained without a struggle with self. We feel convinced that hundreds of times he must have inwardly cursed humdrum Antwerp, and narrow and narrow-minded Belgium; the mere strip of ground we call Brabant or Flanders must have appeared many a time as offering no suitable fatherland to a genius like his. Then there was that monotonous domestic existence, his never-changing surroundings, whether animate or inanimate; the haggling about the price of a picture with guild-masters or ecclesiastical consistories; the necessity of dancing to the tune of prelates without intellect, of nobles without education, of burgomasters replete with beer and bad taste. Rubens, like Reynolds, was great by reason of his moderation, his *justesse*, his self-conquest. His social position was hardly adequate to a man of such resplendent energy and wisdom, specialist (like Vanburgh) in works of the largest size. But he managed to keep content, to enjoy, to circumscribe, to refuse, to sacrifice the *mieux* sometimes, but to keep at bay everything distasteful to him by sheer hard work. In this, perhaps, is the secret of his tranquillity, his equilibrium and, above all, of his achievement, which was that of a demigod. When he died, in May 1640, he was saturated with fame which had known no abatement, and his convention held the field unchallenged for nearly a hundred years after. And,

wherever we wend our steps to-day in quest of the picturesque, whether to Antwerp, Brussels, Malines, Paris, London, Lille, Madrid, Berlin, Dresden, Munich, Petrograd, Vienna, Florence, we are overwhelmed alike with a sense of Peter Paul's exuberance, sheer strength, graphic energy, athletic outline, splendour of form and gorgeousness of colouring.

Antwerp and London are united in the cult of Sir Anthony Van Dyck. By birth and descent he was the most Anversois of all the masters. In 1619, aged barely twenty, he entered the Guild and began working for Rubens. He drew the paintings of the Great Master for the engravers, and was often stipulated for by name as chief of the 'understudies.' Two years later he was lured to London and Windsor and then to Italy, the goal of northern painters; but he returned to his native city in 1626 as rival of Rubens, and did his supreme work there until in 1632—for the remaining nine years of his life—he made London his headquarters. His finest religious pieces are still at Antwerp, the greatest of all his 'Pietàs,' 'Christ on the Cross,' 'St. Augustine' in the Museum; others in churches. His non-religious works are more dispersed, perhaps, than those of any great master. His sacred paintings are in contrast to Rubens in their sobriety and refinement of colour, their freedom from violent or contorted acting, and the shrinking from the nude and fleshy presentation in art. As a portraitist he may lack the precision of Holbein, the glow and vitality of Velasquez or Moro, the technical skill of Frans Hals, the rugged and mysterious human pathos of Rembrandt, but in his own exquisite style he

is supreme, and his genius needs no interpreter. He possessed in a high degree the genius of Taste. And to this day the possession of a family portrait by Van Dyck is tantamount to a patent of nobility.

Having inspected the Quais, the Steen, the Hôtel de Ville, the Museum and the Pictures, the great churches, the Place Verte and the view from the Tower, the fine new boulevards and the statues of Rubens, Jordaens, Teniers and so on, the wanderer will still have the best of Antwerp to explore, that is the historic aroma that still lurks in out-of-the-way corners among old buildings which seem to have dropped straight out of Victor Hugo and Riou. There are a few trade halls radiating from the Grand' Place. The great network of old houses that, as once at Cologne, besieged the Dom and seem to swarm up it from the river level, all this has gone, swept clean away. But old houses still reward the eye of the intrepid footman. Every corner of the old town reveals a gable or two to delight the eye by its extraordinary beauty. These dwellings rise six, seven, or even eight stories high without disturbing the harmony of a façade, and look down with a well-earned contempt upon the barrack-like structures of the recent prosperous age. In spite of the success of its commerce, Antwerp will remain for the student and the thoughtful a casket of souvenirs and a city of dreams, and, as must be the case with most of such cities with a long history, the dreams will be sure to include one or two nightmares.

MALINES

To many it is feared Malines is no more than a railway station — it was the first in Belgium, and Gautier describes his first ride in a Belgian train very amusingly about 1839—and a vast tower: the East Anglian is reminded thereby of Boston Stump, visible to well-visioned people across the waters of the Wash from Hunstanton, some sixteen miles away. This tower was intended originally to support a spire 650 feet in height, the greatest spire ever projected by mediæval architecture. No city of the Lowlands has been bartered about more by its Seigneurs than Malines. It was the same when the religious troubles began. First Alva and Parma, then Orange and Norris—the English skinned the town badly in the Protestant interest in 1580; but finally the Duke of Parma won it back in 1585 and expelled the 'Reformed.' In 1713 it was transferred from Spain to Austria, in 1746 the French captured it, then back to Austria, 1794 annexed to France, 1815 to Holland, Belgian once more in 1831.

In 1559 it became the seat of an archbishopric, and to-day is the cathedral of the primate of Belgium. A great city for Guilds, Hospices, Corporations and Aldermanries, the city which prosperity has not spoiled contains to this day many of the finest old houses in Europe. The cathedral is a composite structure mostly of the middle of the fifteenth century, but dating back in part very much earlier. The foundation of St. Rombaut's mighty tower was laid in 1452 and stopped

building about 1580, incomplete. The vast clock dials were constructed in 1708 by an English horologer, James Willmore. The choir is fine, but much concealed by houses. The interior, as in so many Belgian churches, is first over-embellished with statues and then whitewashed, so much so that one shakes oneself as one comes out as one does in emerging from a mill.

The Chapter of the Golden Fleece was held here from time to time, and the interior is full of monuments and armorial bearings. The pulpit is characteristic of West Flanders in its elaborately fanciful luxuriance of detail. Figures the size of life represent the Conversion of St. Paul. The saint and his horse are on the ground at the foot of the mass of rock forming the base of the structure. Jesus on the Cross and a number of other figures enter into the composition, dating about 1660, when the high altar was commenced. There are also some modern stalls of merit and a throne of 1723. The accessories to the cathedral would fill an extensive catalogue, from the organ and chimes to the carvings and pictures, local, such as those of Coxie, or world famed such as the 'Calvary' of Van Dyck. This last has been in its present position in the south transept since 1846, and was described by Descamps as Van Dyck's *chef d'œuvre.* It represents the Saviour upon the cross, in the placid repose of death, between the two thieves, who are still writhing in its agonies. At the foot of the cross is St. Mary Magdalene, whose hair Sir Joshua Reynolds found fault with for being too silky, and looking more like silk drapery than hair. On the right-hand side of the cross is the Virgin in the deepest

grief; behind her is St. John; and on her left an armed soldier on horseback, whose action and countenance express a profound astonishment at the awful scene; in front of him is the half-naked executioner, and in the distance a crowd of people. The picture has been cleaned once or twice, but has suffered little from the ravages of time. The darkness and the cold light surprise the beholder.

The cathedral church is the centrepiece of the town, and forms a background to all its activities. Here is the big market, comestibles of every kind, especially vegetables and fruit. The Malines people are, by tradition, the moonrakers of Belgium, but the price they had the conscience to charge a foreigner for a pottle of strawberries did not seem to the writer to confirm the imputation of an innocent simplicity. The old houses on the quay are the paradise of the private photographer. The House of the Archers, built in 1728, is one of the latest; then there is the fine old palace of Margaret of Austria (aunt of Charles V.), who died at Malines (1538); the Halles, the old Maison Échevinale, now Museum; the Cloth Hall, the Salm Inn, and many others. St. John's church is famous for its pictures illustrating the name-saint by Rubens, who once remarked: 'If you want to see some of my best pictures you must go to Malines.' The writer went more expressly to see the famous 'Miraculous Draught' on the high altar of Notre Dame. This, with companion pictures on wings of the Apostles finding tribute money in the jaws of a fish and the archangel Raphael and St. Tobit, was commissioned by the Guild

of Fishmongers in 1618 for 1600 florins. It is not very well lit, and the plate we took had to be exposed for a very long time. I was reminded of the story of the name by Erckmann-Chatrian. The painter is splendid at waterpieces but has little love of the element as a beverage. His masterpiece is won from him in a drinking bout by rather sharp practice. His son, also a marine painter, decides to win it back, and challenges the champion. After thirty hours, draft for draft, the young painter wins the test of threading a needle. He then changes the drink, as he has the traditional right to do, from lambic to skidam. The lost picture is won. The picture of the fishermen, their boats and nets gorged with fish, has points which give it preference, in our opinion, to the more famous 'Adoration of the Magi' or 'Three Kings' of Cologne in the church of St. John.

LIERRE

At Lierre, a town of 22,000 inhabitants, which lies about nine miles south-east of Antwerp, there is a church dedicated to St. Gommarius, which Mr. Bumpus describes as 'one of the most magnificent and harmoniously proportioned of the great Belgian churches, in progress during the greater part of the fifteenth century, and remarkable not only for its sumptuous rood-loft, but for its window tracery, than which nothing can be more varied and beautiful. Although the construction of this superb specimen of Flemish architecture was undertaken at intervals, from 1425, when the foundations were laid, to 1515, the design exhibits great

homogeneity.' The tower is square as far as the roof of the nave; it then becomes octagonal and is roofed with a cupola, which replaces a wooden spire destroyed in the eighteenth century. The window tracery is not only very fine, but what gives great interest, it is in its original condition. Mr. Bumpus says that the interior of St. Gommaire bears a striking resemblance to the cathedral at Malines, though it is less grandiose than the latter. The general effect is very pleasing, but the rood-loft, the work of Henri Van Prée of Brussels, is especially worth noticing, as it is one of the few in Belgium that has escaped destruction, and is perhaps the finest in the country. He adds that the screen itself would well repay a visit from England. The stained-glass windows are fine, and three of them were presented to the church by the Emperor Maximilian. The chief possession of the church is a picture by Hans Memling, representing the 'Marriage of Our Lady.' Lierre is a manufacturing town, its chief industry being silk weaving, for which there are several factories.

Lierre (near Antwerp) —
Entrance to the Béguinage

GHENT

CHAPTER IV

GHENT

GENT, Gand, or in English Ghent, is situated on a network of rivers. The Scheldt or Escaut and the Lys or Ley, to say nothing of the Lieve and the Moere, divide the town into twenty-six islands and necessitate the use of eighty-eight bridges. One would imagine that number would suffice, but Mr. Paquet Syphorien, writing of Ghent in 1816, agrees in regard to the twenty-six islands, but states that there are three hundred bridges. He then goes on to speak of the decadence of the town, and perhaps the bridges to which he alludes have suffered in the same measure as the industries. Ghent still has extensive bleaching-grounds, and these he is careful to mention.

The Low Countries of Holland and Flanders have owed their prosperity to their waterways and dykes. Bruges and Ghent, both so well served by rivers and canals, have enjoyed the advantages of seaports without the risks of invasions from the sea. Situated within a few miles of the North Sea, their system of rivers and canals facilitated the approach of the merchant shipping to the centre of their towns. These characteristics were widely known, and Dante shows an acquaintance with the country round Ghent in his *Divine Comedy*:—

'. . . the Flemings rear
Their mound, 'twixt Ghent and Bruges, to chase back
The Ocean, fearing its tumultuous tide
That drives towards them.'[1]

A rivalry existed for many years between Bruges and Ghent. Both were thriving industrial centres, and were respectively the capitals of West and East Flanders. The burghers had their distinct interests political and civic, but they continued to flourish after the prosperity of Bruges had begun to wane.

Early in the thirteenth century Artois came under the dominion of France, and the Counts of Flanders took up their residence at Ghent. The inhabitants of this town early developed a spirit of independence which was noticeable especially among the weavers, of whom was composed a large proportion of the most prosperous citizens. Their power under arms increased to such an extent that they were successful in repulsing an invading army of Edward I. composed of 24,000 men, and later, in 1302, their part in the Battle of the Spurs, with the citizens of Bruges, largely contributed to the defeat of the French under the command of the Count of Artois, and to the capture of the 700 golden spurs worn by the vanquished knights.

The issue of this famous battle had a far-reaching effect for the Flemings, who secured for themselves an immunity for some time from French invasion.

Although nominally subject to the Counts of Flanders, the citizens of Ghent practically enjoyed

[1] *Inferno*, xvi. 4-7 (Cary's translation).

the independence of a republic. The levying of unpopular taxes was promptly resented by the burghers, who expelled without ceremony, and often by means of arms, the persons sent to exact the tribute. The Ghenters were during their greatest prosperity a turbulent and implacable community, and revolutions were of frequent occurrence. Jacques van Artevelde was at this time—the early part of the fourteenth century—one of the stoutest champions of their liberties. A wealthy man of noble birth, he aspired to and attained the position of a popular demagogue, partly, it is said, by becoming a member of the guild of brewers in order to ingratiate himself with the people, but also by means of his gifts as an orator.

The Flemish people formerly had a common interest in opposing the aggression of the French, but in 1322, on the accession of Count Louis of Nevers, they became disunited. Louis by birth, education, and sympathies was a Frenchman, and his despotic methods of ruling were anything but to the liking of the sturdy Flemish burghers. A general rising resulted, Louis fled and sought the help of Philip VI. of France, and Van Artevelde was made Protector of Flanders. As leader of the democratic forces of his town he formed an alliance with Edward III. in the war between England and France, the adherents of Count Louis ranging themselves on the side of the latter. Commercially the alliance was productive of great benefits to the people of Ghent, as it opened a market for them —as the greatest woollen manufacturers of Europe— with the English, who were large producers of raw

wool. The manufacture of woollen goods was also introduced into England, much to the profit of Flanders. But Van Artevelde's rule in other respects was not so successful. He became autocratic, and merciless to any who displeased him or questioned his authority. The nobles, or those betraying sympathies with their sovereign, he banished or put to death.

At length, when he proposed that the son of King Edward should be elected Count of Flanders, the Ghenters rebelled and Artevelde was killed on 17th July 1345, by Gerard Denys, in his house, which still stands—and is now known as No. 19 Kalandenburg—between the Place d'Armes and the Cathedral. Philip, the son of Van Artevelde, was as ambitious as his father without possessing his ability. During the civil rebellion in Ghent against the rule of Count Louis of Flanders, Philip became dictator of the people, and at the time of the famine in 1381, when the Flemings were about to surrender, he advised them to make a still further resistance, which resulted in a complete defeat of the Count. Philip was encouraged by this success to assume the title of Regent of Flanders, when he maintained a position of much splendour and extravagance. But his prosperity was short-lived. He was little versed in the mysteries of statecraft, and his arrogant and overbearing attitude excited the ire of Charles VI. of France, who forthwith marched against Flanders and defeated the Ghenters at the battle of Rooseberg. At this disastrous battle Philip van Artevelde was slain with 20,000 other Flemings; Count Louis regained possession of Ghent, and after his death

it passed into the possession of the Dukes of Burgundy, who often made their residence in the town.

The Ghenters endeavoured to maintain their independence under the sway of their new rulers. Their opposition to what they deemed an unfair tax on salt, imposed by Philip le Bon in 1448, led to a rebellion or civil war, but the Ghenters were able to hold out for five long years. The burghers, as was to be expected, were ultimately defeated with a loss of 16,000 men. They lost also by this war all their former privileges, while fines and taxes were now levied on them to an extent which entirely crippled their resources. The chief citizens, moreover, were compelled to march out of the city with halters round their necks, and they were made to humble themselves by kissing the dust at the feet of their conqueror.

In the following old lines, which were supposed to characterise the people of the six chief towns of Belgium, allusion is made to the humiliating punishment of the Ghenters:

Nobilibus Bruxella viris, Antverpia nummis,
Gandavum laqueis, formosis Bruga puellis,
Lovanium doctis, gaudet Mechlinia stultis!

Brussels rejoices in noblemen, Antwerp in money,
Ghent in halters, Bruges in pretty girls,
Louvain in learned men, and Malines in fools.

The daughter and heiress of Charles the Bold, Mary of Burgundy, was married at Ghent to the Archduke, afterwards Emperor, Maximilian in 1477, and by this union the Netherlands came under the rule

of Austria. Charles V., who was always heart and soul a Fleming, was born at Ghent in 1500, and he was justly proud of his birthplace, for during his reign the town flourished and increased until it was one of the greatest and wealthiest in Europe. At that time Ghent contained 35,000 houses with a population of 175,000, considerably more than it numbers to-day. So that Charles's pride was justifiable when he boasted to Francis I. : 'Je mettrai votre Paris dans mon Gand.'

The great ship canal which connects Ghent with the sea was constructed in 1827 with the object of protecting the town from inundations. But it was designed for another purpose, that of assisting trade, which for many years had suffered owing to the silting up of the smaller rivers. The Scheldt is still navigable, but the advantage of the canal is that although it runs into that river its course to the sea is shorter. Since, however, Belgium became independent of Holland the canal has been little used, owing to the heavy tolls imposed by the Dutch on vessels using the waterway. The older part of Ghent is contained within the island formed by the Lys and the Scheldt, and here are to be found most of the ancient buildings of the town. The old fortifications have been dismantled and converted into boulevards and canals.

The ancient Palace of the Counts of Flanders has disappeared, but there still remains a remnant of the building at the corner of the small Place Ste. Pharailde. This fragment of the Oudeburg consists of an ancient, massive, castellated gateway with loop-holes, Romanesque arches, and bastions built in 1180 on the

An Estaminet or Inn
outside Louvain

[illegible] heart and soul [illegible] and he was [illegible] the reign the [illegible] was one of the [illegible] Ghent [illegible] 17,000. [illegible] that [illegible] to [illegible]

[illegible] quarter. Since [illegible] independence of Holland the [illegible] owing to the heavy tolls [illegible] along the waterway. [illegible] within the island [illegible] and here are to be [illegible] buildings of the town. The [illegible] dismantled and converted [illegible]

[illegible] of the Counts of Flanders has [illegible] remains a remnant of the [illegible] of the small Place du Flan- [illegible] of the Duckburg consists of an [illegible] gateway with loop-holes, [illegible] and bastions built in 1180 on the

site of an earlier stronghold erected in 868. Much of the history of Ghent centres round this palace. It was here that Jacques van Artevelde entertained his ally Edward III. in 1339. His son, John of Gaunt, was not, however, born in the palace, as is often stated, but at the monastery of St. Bavon, where Queen Philippa was living during the absence of the king in England. On returning to Flanders his entry to Bruges was barred by the French fleet near Sluys, and his encounter with it constituted one of the earliest English victories on the sea. Among the many notable prisoners who have languished in the castle was the beautiful Jacqueline, Countess of Holland, who was kept here for three months by Philippe le Bon of Burgundy in 1424.

The Belfry, in the Marché au Beurre, is a lofty square tower, the building of which was begun in 1183 and continued till 1339, when operations were suspended, only two-thirds of the original design having been completed. These designs are still in existence and are preserved among the archives of the city. The tower was repaired in 1855, and the iron spire was added and painted to represent stone-work. The spire is surmounted by a gilt vane ten feet long, in the shape of a dragon, which, according to a long-cherished tradition, was taken from the Church of St. Sophia at Constantinople, and brought to Ghent in 1204 by Count Baldwin VIII. Doubt has recently been thrown on this story by the discoveries of an antiquarian, who states that the dragon was made in Ghent—perhaps, however, from an Eastern design. The Great Tocsin bell was recast in 1659 and bears the name of

Roland, with an inscription stating that 'when I ring hastily then it is fire, when slowly there is a storm in Flanders.' One of the bells suffered a curious accident in the year 1789, when it was fired on by a cannon with the intention of silencing it. The bell was pierced by the ball, but it did not have the desired effect, for its tone was not even impaired. The belfry may be ascended, and an extensive view often is to be obtained from the summit. An old story is told of Alva, who, while prosecuting his campaign of terror in the Netherlands, contemplated the destruction of Ghent. Charles V. (who never resisted an opportunity of showing pride in his native city) is said to have frustrated the designs of the Spanish General by taking him to the top of the tower and remarking, as he pointed to the view, 'Combien faudrait-il de peaux d'Espagne pour faire un Gant de cette grandeur ?' [1]

The building at the base of the belfry is the town prison, and is called the *Mamme lokker*, after an eighteenth-century sculpture, of little artistic merit, situated near the Hôtel de Ville, of a Roman daughter feeding from her breast, through the bars of a prison window, her old father, who languishes in chains. The object of the group was evidently intended to excite the compassion of the public for the prisoners confined in the neighbouring cells.

One of the outstanding architectural features of Ghent is the beautiful Hôtel de Ville. This massive

[1] Charles V. could hardly have made his *bon mot* to Alva; perhaps the Burgomaster, a precursor of the witty M. Max of Brussels, was responsible for this apt retort.

block of masonry is composed of two parts joined together, but distinct in design and erected at different dates. The façade facing the Rue Haut Port is the later portion, and a fine example of an early Renaissance public building dating between 1595 and 1628. It comprises three stories with rows of long windows flanked by half-columns, doric on the ground floor, ionic on the first, and corinthian on the second. The roof carries two dormers. The general effect, however, is somewhat severe and formal, in contrast with the earlier portion of the building, which is considered to be the finest piece of florid Gothic architecture in Belgium. This part of the Town Hall was constructed between the years 1481 and 1533 from designs by Dominicus van Waghemakere, who also built the Hôtel de Ville at Antwerp. It occupies an angle formed by the Rue Haut Port and the Marché au Beurre, and the corner where these two streets meet is rounded by a handsome projecting polygon, at the side of which is a lofty doorway approached by steps, with a balcony designed, and in the past used, for addressing the people in the street below. The building, which has undergone restoration, consists of two stories with long windows, and between the lower tier are niches from which the ancient figures have been removed ; but some of the spaces are filled with modern statues of saints. Near the centre of the façade in the Marché au Beurre is a chapel marked by a large projecting window. In former days the Hôtel de Ville was the scene of many important events in the history of Ghent. A congress met here in 1576 with a view to expelling the Spaniards

from the Netherlands, and a treaty known as the Pacification of Ghent was drawn up and signed in the throne-room. In July 1803 Napoleon with Josephine, and accompanied by his generals, made a solemn entry into Ghent, and the First Consul and his staff were entertained at a sumptuous banquet and fête at the Town Hall on the following day.

The oldest church in Ghent is St. Nicholas, situated in the Marché aux Graines. Originally founded in 1051, the present Early Gothic building was erected mainly between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. It is a solid and picturesque structure, from the centre of which rises a tall square-turreted tower. At the west-end gable of the nave there is a large Gothic window flanked by two towers. The interior contains some fine early pillars in the choir, and a carved pulpit; most of its ancient pictures formerly in the church were destroyed by revolutions and other disasters.

The Church of St. Michael is a handsome late Gothic building constructed between 1445 and 1515. The solid but unfinished tower was to have been raised with a spire to a height of 400 feet. The exterior sculptures have suffered badly from mutilations, probably in 1784, at the time of the French Revolution, when the church was deprived of its art treasures and turned into a Temple of Reason. It contains a fine but over-restored picture of the Crucifixion by Van Dyck, which tradition says was painted in six weeks for 800 florins.

Among the illustrious men who were either born at Ghent or contributed to its fame we have already mentioned Charles V., and John of Gaunt (or Ghent),

son of Edward III. and Philippa of Hainault, Shakespeare's 'Lancaster' and father of Henry IV.

The celebrated painters Hubert and Jan van Eyck were not natives of Ghent, but their association with it adds a glory to the town. They were probably born at Alden Eyck or Maas Eyck on the Maas, and the date of Hubert's birth is supposed to have been about the year 1370, and that of Jan about 1390. For a long time they enjoyed the distinction of having invented the process of painting in oil. But if they did not actually originate it, they helped to perfect its use. Jan seems to have learnt his art from his brother, and to have held the position with him of Court painter to Philip of Charolais till 1422. He then was employed by John of Bavaria, Count of Holland, and in 1425 became painter and valet-de-chambre to Philip le Bon. Much of his work was done at Bruges (where he died on 9th June 1440), but Hubert remained at Ghent till his death, which happened on 18th September 1426, and he was buried there in the Cathedral, although all traces of his tomb have disappeared. Hubert's masterpiece, and indeed the only work in which we know incontestably he had a hand, is 'The Adoration of the Lamb that was Slain.' This famous altar-piece was not completed at the time of his death, and his brother finished it for him. The masterpiece was commissioned from Van Eyck by Jodocus Vydt, who presented it to the Cathedral of St. Bavon at Ghent.

The exterior of the Cathedral, a cumbrous Gothic building, is architecturally without much interest; the crypt below the choir dates from 941, the other portions

from 1288 to 1554. Originally dedicated to St. John the Baptist, now under the invocation of St. Bavon, the Cathedral contains the relics of that saint, of whose history it is not easy to learn much. He is supposed to have been a soldier, and up to the age of fifty he devoted himself to the pleasures of the world. But the death of his wife at this time prostrated him with grief: he sold all his possessions, and giving the money to the poor, retired to a monastery. Not, however, finding convent life strict enough, he left the monks, hid himself in a forest and took shelter in a hollow tree, which he did not quit until his death.

The interior of the Cathedral is imposing, and the massive square pillars give it the appearance of strength. The walls of the choir are decorated with black marble; the high altar bears a seventeenth-century sculpture of the patron saint of the church in ducal robes. The four large copper candlesticks on the high altar, which bear the English arms, were once the personal property of Charles I., and adorned St. Paul's Cathedral; they were sold by order of the Commonwealth. On the walls of the nave the names are inscribed of the Knights of the Order of the Golden Fleece with their armorial bearings. The last chapter of the Order was held in the Cathedral in 1559 by Philip II.

The pulpit, one of those elaborately carved pieces of work which are to be found in many of the Belgian cathedrals and churches, was constructed in 1745 of oak and marble from designs by Delvaux. It represents Truth, in the figure of a woman with flowing tresses, revealing the Christian faith to Paganism, an old man.

The altarpiece in the tenth chapel is by Rubens, and represents St. Bavon in the seventeenth-century dress of a Duke of Brabant renouncing a worldly and military career for a monastic life. The picture is in two parts. The head of the saint in the upper section is said to be a portrait of the painter, and the two ladies on the left are Rubens's two wives. The picture, which is a fine specimen of Rubens's work, was originally painted in 1624 for the high altar of the Cathedral, but was removed in the eighteenth century and replaced by a painting of inferior merit by Verbruggen.

The Cathedral contains many fine pictures, but nothing finer than the world-famous triptych of the 'Adoration of the Lamb that was Slain' by the brothers Van Eyck, which is preserved in the sixth chapel.

The history of the altarpiece shows that on more than one occasion it was in danger of demolition. Philip II. desired to obtain possession of it, but he did not succeed in his endeavours and had to be contented with a copy made to his order by Coxie. It was only with difficulty rescued from the Protestants, who threatened to destroy it in 1566. In 1641 it was saved from fire. The Emperor Joseph II. in 1784 expressed his disapproval of the naked figures of Adam and Eve as not being decent for a church, and got a church-warden to remove these two panels and put them away out of sight, and they remained *perdu* until 1861, when they were transferred to the Brussels Museum in exchange for Coxie's copies of the wings. The altar-piece, minus Adam and Eve, was seized by the French

in 1794 and conveyed to Paris, but after the fall of Napoleon it was restored to Antwerp in 1815. For no explained reason the central portion only was reinstated in the Cathedral, and the wings came into the hands of a dealer who, doubtless understanding their value, sold them for 410,000 francs to the Berlin Museum.

The triptych in its entirety consisted of twelve panels of various sizes arranged in two rows; an early copy of the complete picture is to be seen in the Antwerp Museum. The only original portions of the picture, then, in the Cathedral are the central panels. The wings are old copies by Coxie of the originals in Berlin, and the figures of Adam and Eve are copies (with skin-tight clothing) from the originals at Brussels.

The following is from Crowe and Cavalcaselle's description of the altarpiece with some alterations. The central panel at the top is a dignified representation of God the Father enthroned and robed in a gorgeous red mantle which completely enshrouds His form, fastened at the breast by a large jewelled brooch. In His left hand He holds a sceptre of splendid workmanship, and with two fingers gives a blessing to the world. His head bears a white tiara ornamented with a profusion of diamonds, pearls, and amethysts. Two dark lappets fall on either side of the face. The throne of black damask is embroidered with gold.

The feet rest on a golden pedestal carpeted with black, and on the dark ground, which is cut into perspective squares by lines of gold, lies a richly jewelled, open-work crown, emblematic of martyrdom. This figure of the Redeemer is grandly imposing; the

mantle, though laden with precious stones, in obedience to a somewhat literal interpretation of Scripture, falls from the shoulders and over the knee to the feet in ample and simple folds. The colour of the flesh is powerful, brown, and glowing, and full of vigour, that of the vestments strong and rich. The hands are well drawn, perhaps a little contracted in the muscles, but still of startling realism. On the right of Christ the Virgin sits in her traditional robe of blue, her long fair hair, bound to the forehead by a diadem, flowing in waves down her shoulders. With most graceful hands she holds a book, and pensively looks with a placid and untroubled eye into space. On the left of the Eternal, St. John the Baptist rests, long-haired and bearded, austere in expression, splendid in form, and covered with a broad, flowing green drapery. On the spectator's right of St. John the Baptist, St. Cecilia, in a black brocade, plays on an oaken organ, supported by three or four angels with viols or harps. On the left of the Virgin a similar but less beautiful group of singing choristers stand in front of an oaken desk, the foremost of them dressed in rich and heavy brocade. (Van Mander declares that the angels who sing are so artfully done that we mark the difference of keys in which their voices are pitched.) On the spectator's right of St. Cecilia once stood the naked figure of Eve, now removed to the Brussels Museum—a figure upon which the painter seems to have concentrated all his knowledge of perspective as applied to the human form and its anatomical development. Counterpart to Eve, and once on the left side of the picture, Adam is

equally remarkable for the correctness of proportion and natural realism. Here again the master's science in optical perspective is conspicuous, and the height of the figure above the eye is fitly considered. (Above the figures of Adam and Eve are miniature groups of the sacrifices of Cain and Abel and the death of Abel.)

Christ, by His position, presides over the sacrifice of the Lamb, as represented in the lower panels of the shrine. The scene of the sacrifice is laid in a landscape formed of green hills receding in varied and pleasing lines from the foreground to the extreme distance. A Flemish city, meant, no doubt, to represent Jerusalem, is visible chiefly in the background to the right; but churches and monasteries, built in the style of the early edifices of the Netherlands and Rhine country, boldly raise their domes and towers above every part of the horizon, and are sharply defined on a sky of pale blue gradually merging into a deeper hue. The trees, which occupy the middle ground, are not of high growth, nor are they very different in colour from the undulating meadows in which they stand. They are interspersed here and there with cypresses, and on the left is a small date-palm. The centre of the picture is all meadow and green slope, from a foreground strewed with daisies and dandelions to the distant blue hills.

In the very centre of the picture a square altar is hung with red damask and covered with white cloth. Here stands a lamb, from whose breast a stream of blood issues into a crystal glass. Angels kneel round the altar with parti-coloured wings and variegated dresses, many of them praying with joined hands, others

holding aloft the emblems of the Passion, two in front waving censers. From a slight depression of the ground to the right, a little behind the altar, a numerous band of female saints is issuing, all in rich and varied costumes, fair hair floating over their shoulders, and palms in their hands; foremost may be noticed St. Barbara with the tower and St. Agnes. From a similar opening on the left, popes, cardinals, bishops, monks, and minor clergy advance, some holding croziers and crosses, others palms. This, as it were, forms one phase of the Adoration. In the centre near the base of the picture a small octagonal fountain of stone, with an iron jet and tiny spouts, projects a stream into a rill, whose pebbly bottom is seen through the pellucid water. The fountain and the altar, with vanishing points on different horizons, prove the Van Eycks to have been unacquainted with the science of linear perspective. Two distant groups are in adoration on each side of the fountain. That on the right comprises the twelve apostles, in light greyish violet cloaks, kneeling bare-footed on the sward, with long hair and beards, expressing in their noble faces the intensity of their faith. On their right stands a gorgeous array of three popes, two cardinal monks, seven bishops, and a miscellaneous crowd of church and lay men. The group on the left of the fountain is composed of kings and princes in various costumes, the foremost of them kneeling, the rest standing, none finer than that of a dark bearded man in a red cloth cap stepping forward in full front towards the spectator, dressed in a dark blue mantle and holding a sprig of myrtle. The whole

of the standing figures command prolonged attention from the variety of the attitudes and expressions, the stern resolution of some, the eager glances of others, the pious resignation and contemplative serenity of the remainder. The faithful who have reached the scene of the sacrifice are surrounded by a perfect wilderness of flowering shrubs, lilies, and other beautiful plants, and remain in quiet contemplation of the Lamb.

Numerous worshippers besides are represented on the wings of the triptych, moving towards the place of worship. On the left is a band of crusaders, the foremost of whom, on a dapple-grey charger, is clad in armour with an undercoat of green slashed stuff, a crown of laurel on his brow, and a lance in his hand. On his left two knights are riding, also in complete armour, one on a white, the other on a brown charger, carrying lances with streamers. Next to the third figure, a nobleman in a fur cap bestrides an ass, whose ears appear above the press ; on his left a crowned monarch on a black horse ; behind them a crowd of kings and princes. In rear of them, and in the last panel to the left, Hubert van Eyck, with long brown hair, in a dark cap, the fur peak of which is turned up, ambles forward on a spirited white pony. He is dressed in blue velvet lined with grey fur ; his saddle has long green housings. In the same line with him two riders are mounted on sorrel nags, and next them again a man in a black turban and dark brown dress trimmed with fur, whom historians agree in calling Jan van Eyck. The face is turned towards Hubert, and therefore away from the direction taken by the cavalcade ;

further in rear are several horsemen. The two groups proceed along a sandy path, which yields under the horses' hoofs, and seems to have been formed by the detritus of a block of stony ground rising perpendicularly behind, on each side of which the view extends to a rich landscape, with towns and churches in the distance on one hand, and a beautiful vista of blue and snow mountains on the other. White, fleecy clouds float in the sky. There is not to be found in the whole Flemish school a picture in which human figures are grouped, designed, or painted with so much perfection as in this of the mystic Lamb. Nor is it possible to find a more complete or better distributed composition, more natural attitudes, or more dignified expression. Nowhere in the pictures of the early part of the fifteenth century can such airy landscapes be met. Nor is the talent of the master confined to the appropriate representation of the human form, his skill extends alike to the brute creation. The horses, whose caparisons are of the most precious kind, are admirably drawn and in excellent movement. One charger stretches his neck to lessen the pressure of the bit, another champs the curb with Flemish phlegma, a third throws his head down between his fore legs; the pony ridden by Hubert van Eyck betrays a natural fire, and frets under the restraint put upon it.

On the right side of the altarpiece we see a noble breed of ascetics with tangled hair and beards and deep complexions, dressed in frock and cowl, with staves and rosaries, moving round the base of a rocky bank, the summit of which is wooded and interspersed with

palms and orange trees. Two female saints, one of them the Magdalene, bring up the rear of the hermit band, which moves out of a grove of orange trees with glossy leaves and yellow fruit. In the next panel to the right, and in a similar landscape, St. Christopher, pole in hand, in a long red cloak of elegant folds, overtops the rest of his companions—pilgrims with grim and solemn faces. Here a palm and cypress are painted with surprising fidelity.

The altarpiece, when closed, has not the all-absorbing interest of its principal scenes when open. It is subdivided first into two parts, in the upper portion of which is the Annunciation, in the lower the portraits of Jodocus Vydts and his wife, and imitated statues of St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist. In the semicircular projection of the upper central panel are the Sibyls, whilst half figures of Zachariah and Micah are placed in the semicircles above the annunciate angel and Virgin. With the exception of Jodocus and his wife and the Annunciation, the whole of this outer part of the panels may have been executed under supervision by the pupils of the Van Eycks.

The Grand Beguinage founded by the Countess of Flanders in 1234 had been removed to the outskirts of Ghent and the site built over. The institution is carried on much in the same way as it was before it was transferred to its present position. Thackeray visited this interesting foundation in its original condition, and has left us the following description :—

'The Beguine College or Village is one of the most extraordinary sights that all Europe can show.

On the confines of the town of Ghent you come upon an old-fashioned brick gate, that seems as if it were one of the city barriers ; but on passing it, one of the prettiest sights possible meets the eye : . . . before you is a red church with a tall roof and fantastical Dutch pinnacles, and all around it rows upon rows of small houses, the queerest, neatest, nicest that ever were seen (a doll's house is hardly smaller or prettier) . . . and to each house is a gate, that has mostly a picture or queer-carved ornament upon or about it, with the name, not of the Beguine who inhabits it, but of the saint to whom she may have devoted it. . . . Old ladies in black are pacing in the quiet alleys here and there, and drop the stranger a curtsy. . . . Never were such patterns of neatness seen as these old ladies and their houses. I peeped into one or two of the chambers, of which the windows were open to the pleasant evening sun, and saw beds scrupulously plain, a quaint old chair or two, and little pictures of favourite saints decorating the spotless white walls. The old ladies kept up a quick, cheerful clatter, as they paused to gossip at the gates of their little domiciles ; and with a great deal of artifice, and lurking behind walls, and looking at the Church as if I intended to design that, I managed to get a sketch of a couple of them.

. . . . .

'A very kind, sweet-voiced, smiling nun . . . came tripping down the steps and across the flags of the little garden-court, and welcomed us with much courtesy into the neat little old-fashioned, red-bricked, gable-ended, shining-windowed Convent of the Angels.

First she showed us a whitewashed parlour, decorated with a grim picture or two and some crucifixes and other religious emblems, where, upon stiff old chairs, the sisters sit and work. Three or four of them were still there, pattering over their laces and bobbins; but the chief part of the sisterhood were engaged in an apartment hard by, from which issued a certain odour which I must say resembled onions, and which was in fact the kitchen of the establishment.

'Every Beguine cooks her own little dinner in her own little pipkin; and there were half a score of them, sure enough, busy over their pots and crockery, cooking a repast, which, when ready, was carried off to a neighbouring room, the refectory, where, at a ledge-table, which is drawn out from under her own particular cupboard, each nun sits down and eats her meal in silence.

. . . . .

'The cells, it need not be said, are the snuggest little nests in the world, with serge-curtained beds and snowy linen, and saints and martyrs pinned against the wall. . . .

'I forget, although the good soul told us, how many times in the day, in public and in private, these devotions are made, but fancy that the morning service in the chapel takes place at too early an hour for most easy travellers. We did not fail to attend in the evening, when likewise is a general muster of the seven hundred, minus the absent and sick, and the sight is not a little curious and striking to a stranger.

'The chapel is a very big whitewashed place of

Courtrai — The Market Place

Then she showed us a [illegible] with a great picture [illegible] and other religious [illegible], the [illegible] and there, [illegible] the [illegible] apartment [illegible] which I must say [illegible] the [illegible]

"Every Beguine [illegible] own little [illegible] [illegible]

"The [illegible] [illegible]

"I [illegible] [illegible]

"The chapel is a [illegible]

worship, supported by half a dozen columns on either side, over each of which stands the statue of an apostle, with his emblem of martyrdom. . . . A couple of old ladies in white hoods were tugging and swaying about at two bell-ropes that came down into the middle of the church, and at least five hundred others in white veils were seated all round about us in mute contemplation until the service began, looking very solemn and white and ghastly, like an army of tombstones by moonlight.

. . . . .

'The novices wear black veils, under one of which I saw a young, sad, handsome face. It was the only thing in the establishment that was the least romantic or gloomy; and, for the sake of any reader of a sentimental turn, let us hope that the poor soul has been crossed in love, and that over some soul-stirring tragedy that black curtain has fallen.'

COURTRAI, TOURNAI, OUDENARDE AND YPRES

CHAPTER V

COURTRAI, TOURNAI, OUDENARDE AND YPRES

ABOUT halfway between Ghent and Lille on the south-eastern verge of the flat Flemish-speaking district is the active manufacturing city of Courtrai, one of the ancient cities of Flanders, famous in days past for its blades, but now celebrated most for its lace and table linen. The flax used in its manufacture is dried in the meadows around Courtrai and then steeped in the waters of the Lei or Lys before it is sent to the factory.

Beneath the walls of Courtrai in July 1302 was fought the famous Battle of the Spurs. Edward I.'s rival, Philip le Bel of France, after punishing the Count Guy of Flanders, visited the wealthy cities of the county himself to assert his suzerainty. As with the Spaniards in 1576, the French cupidity was aroused. A rebellion broke out against the King at Bruges, and Philip despatched a large feudal army under Robert of Artois to crush the insurgents. The result was a foretaste of the great victories of the Swiss over Burgundy and Austria. The battle was the first manifestation of the dawning influence of infantry. It showed conclusively that an infantry force if properly led and handled could more than hold its own against the mounted and heavily accoutred men-at-arms. Once

they got immobile, in mud for example, these boxed up warriors in metal became useless.

Courtrai is a very important link in the history of war between Falkirk, Dupplin Moor and the later victories of the English under Edward III. and Henry V. This battle of the Golden Spurs, as it is sometimes called, must not be confused with the cavalry skirmish at Guinegate in 1513—Henry VIII.'s *baptême de feu*, but not otherwise important. The citizens, arrayed in heavy masses, and still armed with miscellaneous weapons, were careful to place themselves on ground difficult of access—dykes, pools and marshes—and to fasten themselves together, like the Gauls of old. Their van was driven back by the French communal infantry and professional cross-bowmen, whereupon Robert of Artois, true feudal leader as he was, ordered his infantry to clear the way for the cavalry, and without even giving them time to do so pushed through their ranks with a formless mass of gendarmerie. This, in attempting to close with the enemy, plunged into the canals and swamped lands, and was soon immovably fastened in the mud. The citizens swarmed all round it, and with spear, cleaver and flail destroyed it. Robert himself, with a party of his gendarmerie, strove to break through the solid wall of spears, but in vain. He was killed, and his army perished with him, for the citizens did not regard war as a game and ransom as the loser's forfeit. As for the communal infantry which had won the first success, it had long since disappeared from the field, for when Count Robert ordered his heavy cavalry forward, they had thought themselves attacked

in rear by a rush of hostile cavalry—as indeed they were, for the gendarmerie rode them down—and melted away. Hundreds of gilt spurs were gathered on the field from the dead and hung up as a trophy. The fireplaces in the Town Hall at Courtrai compare with those of Bruges and Antwerp. Two massive round towers represent the old defences of the town before the bad days of Louis le Grand. Of the two big churches St. Martin has a wonderful *ciborium* with six finely carved figures dated 1385, and Notre Dame has Van Dyck's great picture of the 'Elevation of the Cross.' The canons were so pleased with it that they sent the painter a box of Courtrai gauffres in addition to the stipulated fee.

Tournai, the capital of Hainault and, like Courtrai, on the French border within a few miles of the frontier that bends south-east of Lille, is an old city with near forty thousand busy citizens, and full of historic interest. In Cæsar's time it was Castrum Tournacum, the stronghold of the Nervii. Under the Merovingians it was a capital city. Childeric died at Tournai. Then Baldwin of the Iron Arm, who had abducted a daughter of Charles the Bald, obtained it and occupied it. From the Counts of Flanders it was bandied about between French and English; Margaret of York, widow of Charles the Bold, held it: Perkin Warbeck hailed from Tournai: Henry VIII., who had generously given the town to Wolsey, next sold it to Francis I. Charles V. filched it from Francis.

It was perhaps at the height of its greatness during the Edwardian period of our history. A truce was signed there

between Edward I. and his rival, Philip le Bel, in 1298. In 1339 Edward III. offered Tournai with Lille and Douai as a bribe to the magnates of Ghent, Bruges and Ypres for their support. In 1340 Edward vainly besieged Tournai. The French refused to attack him and he could do nothing. Its buildings make the city a resplendent prize. Notre Dame, the Cathedral, is Romanesque in its central portion and towers, five in all, grouped about the transepts, but the choir is in the most splendid Early Pointed style. It forms a glorious pile inside and out, and is full of detail of the greatest architectural glory and value; it is the casket of such gems as the ivory carving of St. Nicosius and the ingenious and most skilfully carved shrine of St. Eleutherius, executed in 1247.[1] Another fine church nearly as old as the Cathedral is St. Quentin, which people call 'la petite cathedrale.' Then there is St. Brice's, where Chilperic's tomb was found in 1655, with its hoard of golden bees designed to decorate a mantle, and adopted by Napoleon as his special recognisance. Again there is the monastery of St. Martin, now utilised as the Town Hall. But despite its religious foundations, Tournai went strongly for Reform between 1560 and 1580, and had to be reconquered for Philip II. by the greatest military genius of the age, Alexander of Parma (Farnese). He invested the city by 1st October 1581.

The Prince of Espinoy was absent with the army in the north, but the Princess commanded in his absence.

[1] Eleutherius, a native, became bishop of Tournai about 488, converted Clovis, we are told, and was beaten to death by exasperated heretics in 532. (Dehaisnes, p. 110.)

Oudenarde

[illegible] Flanders [illegible] at 1297. In 1302 [illegible] Lille and Douai as a [illegible] Bruges and Ypres [illegible] nearly besieged [illegible] could [illegible] at [illegible] about [illegible] and [illegible] Cathedral [illegible] Napoleon as the [illegible] the monastery of St. Helena [illegible] But despite [illegible] enough [illegible] had to be [illegible] military [illegible]

[illegible] the [illegible] away in the north [illegible] the [illegible]

[illegible]

She fulfilled her duty in a manner worthy of the house from which she sprang, for the blood of Count Horn was in her veins. The daughter of Mary de Montmorency, the admiral's sister, answered the summons of Parma to surrender at discretion with defiance. The garrison was encouraged by her steadfastness. The Princess appeared daily among her troops, superintending the defences and personally directing the officers. During one of the assaults she is said, but perhaps erroneously, to have been wounded in the arm, notwithstanding which she refused to retire. The siege lasted two months. Meantime, it became impossible for Orange and the Estates, notwithstanding their efforts, to raise a sufficient force to drive Parma from his entrenchments. The city was becoming gradually and surely undermined from without, while at the same time the insidious art of a Dominican friar, Father Géry by name, had been as surely sapping the fidelity of the garrison from within. An open revolt of the Catholic population being on the point of taking place, it became impossible any longer to hold the city. Those of the Reformed faith insisted that the place should be surrendered; and the Princess, being thus deserted by all parties, made an honourable capitulation with Parma. She herself, with all her garrison, was allowed to retire with personal property, and with all the honours of war, while the sack of the city was commuted for one hundred thousand crowns, levied upon the inhabitants. The Princess, on leaving the gates, was received with such a shout of applause from the royal army that she seemed less like a defeated

commander than a conqueror. Upon the 30th November Parma accordingly entered the place, which he had been besieging since the 1st of October.

The heroism of the Princess Christine Lalaing is celebrated by a fine statue in the Grand' Place. Tournai remained in the possession of Spain until the War of Devolution in 1667. By that time Louis, with the aid of Louvois and Colbert, had perfected his aggressive fighting machine, and Tournai was one of the first bunch of barrier cities taken by France—including Bergues, Furnes, Armentières, Courtrai, Lille, Douai, Ath, Binch, Oudenarde and Charleroi. Most, but not all, of these were restored in 1713, and again in 1815. As soon as Tournai was acquired by France it was fortified by Vauban, but it fell in sequence to Lille in 1709. In 1745 it fell into French hands once more, but was restored at the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. . . . My Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim knew its bastions and ravelins well, but the old casemates and ramparts fell a victim to the reforming rage of Joseph II., and 'my uncle' would know the town no more. Even the old Belfry which contains the chimes was renovated out of ancient knowledge in 1852. But an old inhabitant by ascending the spire would recognise the Cathedral, the old Cloth Hall, the Little Cathedral, Henry VIII.'s Tower, the Maison Romaine, the antique Pont des Trous, and a few other mediæval gems.

Of the cockpit of Europe this whole region has been one of the liveliest corners. Tournai itself was the immediate occasion of one of the classical

battles of the eighteenth century, the battle of Fontenoy, a village about four miles south of the town. Cumberland, at the head of the Allies, sought to relieve the town, which the French under Saxe was attacking in May 1745. Louis XV. was there—it was the greatest day of his life. According to Voltaire, a lieutenant of the Grenadier Guards went forward and invited the French to fire first. A French count rejoined, 'Messieurs nous ne tirons jamais les premiers : tirez vous-mêmes.' The Guards brigade carried all before them at first, but elsewhere a converging attack was made, the Dutch had gradually to yield to superior numbers, then the Hanoverians, and finally the British. They retreated in admirable order to Ath, and Saxe himself extolled the perfect steadiness of the British infantry. A little over 7000 men fell on each side. The result, however, that the French aimed at was achieved, for Tournai fell, and soon after it Ghent and Oudenarde. The Cathedral at Tournai is very large, cold and somewhat German in its general appearance. Its vast transept apses remind one of Mayence. Still it is in its way magnificent, has no rival in Flanders, and is a majestic centrepiece to one of the most historic cities in Western Europe. It is a name that should by rights be on our lips much more often than it is, for just as Cheddar cheeses are made at Frome, so Brussels carpets are really made at Tournai. When Henry II. reigned in England, Tournai shipped fonts of black marble to this country, and a number are still to be seen in minsters, such as Winchester and Lincoln, and parish churches—Ipswich and East Meon.

Among the famous men of Tournai must be placed Roger van der Weyden (1400-1473), one of the purest of the Flemish Masters, whose fame has spread from Antwerp over the whole world.

OUDENARDE

Oudenarde (Audenarde) is a factory town of under 7000 inhabitants, not important save for its position on the Scheldt and as dividing Brabant from Flanders. Hence its main interest is strategical. But nevertheless it enshrines one of the gems of the Netherlands—a Town Hall with a façade like a beautiful fall of lacework, which serves with the Town Halls at Brussels and Louvain as an abiding memory to carry away from old Flanders.

This splendid communal building was begun in 1527 and completed in 1530, under the direction of Henri van Pede, town architect of Brussels. The abundance of ornament here becomes profusion without, however, overstepping the limits of good taste. In its total effect this Hôtel de Ville remains a marvel of refined luxury, which forms a strange contrast to the plain modernity of surrounding buildings. The niches, it is true, have lost their statuettes, and one ponders at the thought of its original opulence. As at Brussels, an open gallery runs along the ground floor; above it two stories; on the level with the eaves a parapet surmounted by large statues; in the centre a tower less distinctive in its elegance than the beautiful spire of Brussels, a much blunter pencil, but filigree too as far as it goes. Inside, covering the inner portal of the hall of aldermen,

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

is a magnificent specimen of Renaissance carving, done by Paul van der Schelde in 1531. Twenty-eight little panels grouped about an angel surrounded by foliage interspersed with animal and human heads, sea-horses, birds and flowers, all executed with incomparable care, taste and fancy render this piece of still life a most living work of art to this day.

There are two venerable churches in the town. St. Walburga in the Grand' Place, its Romanesque portions dating from about 1130, some Gothic work from the fifteenth century, including a massive transept and unfinished tower, containing too some paintings by Peter Paul's fluent, florid, but too facile Antwerp disciple, Gaspard de Crayer ; and Notre Dame de Pamele, facing the Scheldt, a fine thirteenth century church, with an octagon built two hundred years later. Under the northern walls of Oudenarde, in an angle of the Scheldt, Marlborough and Eugene fought a great battle to recover the Flemish cities from France on 11th July 1708, twenty-five months after Ramilles. The French army was under Burgundy (Fénelon's pupil and Louis XIV.'s grandson) and Vendôme, and illustrates the fallacy of a control shared by a budding saint and a hardened blackguard. Marlborough came on the scene late and tired, but urged Eugene to cross the river and commence an attack so as to save the town, if possible. The advanced posts of the French were surprised, and withdrew across an intervening stream. Here the battle might have ended with some advantage to the English. Marlborough had not got his men across, still less deployed. But Burgundy was resolved to seize an advantage, and

NO VIMU
AMAGHLIAO

pushed forward his right. They moved far too slowly. Marlborough soon held them, while Cadogan entertained the French left. Marlborough, as night descended, sent Marshal Overkirk round by an eastward loop to fall on the enemy's right flank. The success was complete, the French right wing being broken and demoralised in full view of its exhausted centre. A little after eight Vendôme ordered a general retreat, having lost nearly 20,000 in killed, wounded and missing to the Allies 3000. A battle in such a position as regards the river, after a five league march, and at the end of such a day, is the surest evidence we have of Marlborough's unerring judgment in estimating the morale of an enemy.

If he had possessed Joshua's influence over the sun, and could have obtained another hour of daylight, Marlborough thought he might have concluded the war. As it was, the Allies gleaned a great number of prisoners by sounding the French retreat; while the Huguenot officers in their service drew many French stragglers by means of the regimental rallying cries that were familiar to them, such as 'À moi, Picardie,' or 'À moi, Roussillon.' The battle was noted for the fact that the Pretender and our future king, Dapper George, fought on their respective sides, George exhibiting a dauntless courage. The Prussians too fought well, and were very steady in containing the French centre, while the Dutch contingent under Overkirk largely decided the fortune of the day. It was an impromptu battle, and certainly the most hazardous that Marlborough ever fought. He took the risk because he appreciated the

situation—the lack of mutual understanding in the French command, Eugene's reliability, and, above all, the fear that his own name inspired.

After Oudenarde, the next great operation of the Allies was the siege of Lille, commenced in mid-August 1708. Everything here depended on the line of communications, which was threatened by the French. Convoy after convoy was taken, and one more failure to get the necessary wagons through by the Ostend and Menin road would have meant collapse, for by Michaelmas there remained powder and ball for four days only. Marlborough entrusted a guard of 4000 foot and three squadrons of dragoons to Thackeray's ancestor, the General Webb of *Esmond*. The convoy was attacked on Michaelmas Eve by General Lamothe and some 7000 French, fifteen miles south of Ostend, just north of Thurout, near the ancient and ruined (now restored) castle of Wynendaaele, anciently a stronghold of the Counts of Flanders.

The convoy set out from Ostend some hours before daybreak on 28th September, escorted by Brigadier Landsberg with a force of about 2500 men. Webb, with a force of 4000 foot and three squadrons of dragoons, had received orders on the previous day to cover the convoy in the neighbourhood of Thurout, where it was most liable to attack. As the wagons were defiling through Cochlaer, news was brought to Webb that the enemy had been observed at Ichteghem. He immediately advanced towards that place, but came upon the French in an opening between a dense coppice on the one hand and the wood and castle of Wynendaaele

on the other. Posting his grenadiers in these woods, Webb kept the enemy in play with his small force of cavalry while he formed his infantry in the intervening space. It was nearly dark before De Lamothe, after a long cannonade which did very little execution, ordered a general advance. He had an advantage in point of numbers of three to one; but his infantry were dismayed by the cross fire of the two ambuscades, and, after three attempts to force the position, they retired in the utmost confusion, having suffered a loss of between two and three thousand men; the Allies lost 912 in killed and wounded. While the engagement was in progress the convoy pushed on to Rousselaere, and reached Menin safely the next day. The result was decisive. Lille, the great, idolised fortress of the French, capitulated in three weeks, and within six months Louis XIV. was on his knees to the Allies, literally begging for terms.

YPRES ON THE YPERLÉE

In the abruptness of its rise and fall the city of Ypres makes one think of Nineveh, Amalfi, or, nearer home and on a smaller scale, Winchelsea. Its rapid rise coincided with the reign of William the Bastard in Normandy and England. At his death it was a new but important town; a hundred years later it was the metropolis of Flanders, with nearly a quarter of a million inhabitants, seven churches, a High Court of Justice, a Mint and an Exchange which survives, and is generally known as the grandest civil monument that the great thirteenth century has left us. But the city aroused the

Ypres — The Cathedral

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jealous suspicion of the Counts of Flanders and their allies of England. The siege of 1383 weakened the town irretrievably and drove the trade away to its rivals—Bruges and Ghent. Under the rigorous treatment of Alva and the siege of 1584, directed by Alexander of Parma, Ypres shrank into little more than a straggling village. To-day it aproximates King's Lynn in dimensions and in the general appearance of some of the streets and old houses. A hundred years ago the Dutch restored the defences of Vauban's day. The ramparts are dismantled, but they form boulevards round the town, and afford views as interesting as those of the Haute-Ville at Boulogne. A more splendid massif of ancient stone can hardly be seen anywhere in Europe than the central massif of the Cloth Hall, Hôtel de Ville and Cathedral; the whole forms a colossal cone of architecture, and almost invariably reminds visitors of the Palace of Westminster. The Flemish burghers of the twelfth century first of all built themselves a church, and when that was finished a market-hall and exchange, with a belfry and chimes. That of Ypres took more than a hundred years to build. It was begun in 1200 and finished in 1304. The name of the architect is not known. This enormous hall became the symbol of a trading republic. It occupied the market-place. Its belfry summoned the citizens to the defence of their city. Unhappily this defence was inadequate when brought hard up against the rapacity of the feudatories and crowned autocrats loathed by the soul of the Fleming. But the communal buildings of its prosperous time have remained to delight subsequent ages,

forming a perfect forest of civic architecture.[1] In sheer massivity the Hall at Ypres has no rival among the Flemish cities—excluding always the cyclopean mass of the modern Palais de Justice at Brussels. But any over-inclination to solidity in the great fabric of Ypres is relieved by the Nieuwerck, a sort of eastern annexe to the Cloth Hall, built about 1622 on plans furnished by the Ghent architect Jan Sporeman. This is a pure Renaissance structure, something upon the lines of the Palais de Justice at Rouen. There is a grace and elegance about it, in spite of clumsy modern restoration, that atone for any incongruity. Its success, indeed, in harmonising with the vast Gothic mass at right angles to it must be seen to be believed. The gables and arcades are beautiful alike in detail and in proportion. To the right of the Nieuwerck, as seen from the Grand' Place, are some old houses with quaint step gables; above at the back are seen the *flèche* and lantern of the Cathedral. Inside the great hall of the Halle aux Draps, as it is still called, are some grand beams and *boiseries*, also some modern mural paintings by Pauwels and Delbeke, which have a deserved local celebrity. Some of these paintings or frescoes represent the Mort d'Ypres, the death-dealing malaria of the marshes, whose exhalations caused the white-faced inhabitants to look like ghosts. Ypres itself, alas! is dead by now, it is one of

[1] In his admirable *Art in Flanders*, Max Rooses says of the Ypres Hall, 'It is the most imposing building of the kind in the whole world.' Its symmetry is really majestic. The ensemble is sturdy and massive; it lacks elevation, but it is free from heaviness. Sir Gilbert Scott owed much to it—especially in his work at Hamburg. No more impressive testimony to Flemish industrial prosperity in the Middle Ages could be imagined.

the company of Villes Mortes. Looked down upon by upstarts such as Brussels and Ostend! As in the case of Bruges, there is, of course, much talk of revival, which is to be effected by means of canalising the Yser to Nieuport on the coast.

The Cathedral of St. Martin at Ypres is one of the finest thirteenth century ecclesiastical edifices in the Low Countries. The choir was commenced in 1221 in the late Romanesque style, into which several Gothic features are seen protruding. The nave and transept date from 1254 and are not unworthy of the choir, though they are now in an advanced state of neglect. The splendid portal of the south transept belongs to the early fifteenth century, above it is a polygon rose-window. The tower, of the mid-fifteenth century, is, unfortunately, unfinished. This, and the wretched little yellow brick parish chapel plastered on to the nave near it, contribute to the disfigurement of the Cathedral as a whole. The student of ecclesiastical history as he approaches the altar will be interested to read among the inscriptions at his feet that of Cornelius Jansenius, 1638, seventh bishop of Ypres, whose treatise upon Divine Grace, entitled *Augustinus*, gave rise to the sect of Jansenists. Several old monuments of rare interest were destroyed by the Iconoclasts in the sixteenth century. The general view of the choir from the nave is impressive. It was impressed upon the memory of the writer by a characteristic incident. A typical Englishman, of the central Victorian epoch, accompanied him to the church with a very conspicuous camera. This he erected with great deliberation near the western portal. The

Cathedral was full at the time of intense worshippers, some very solemn ceremonial being in progress. The Yprois are nothing if not devout, and wrathful glances were directed at the imperturbable photographer. The writer felt uncomfortable, and suggested in a tentative way that it would be better to wait until the solemnity was over, the crowd being so great. 'Oh no, quite unnecessary,' was the answer in a firm voice, 'I 've got a small stop in: the plate will not hurt.'

There are numerous old houses of interest to investigate within the boundaries of Ypres. La Boucherie, or Butchers' Hall, is, on its lower stories, of tertiary Gothic of a similar date and style to the Halle aux Draps, and here is installed the Museum. The harmony of proportions, regular design and pleasing colour, render this a truly artistic monument. Victor Hugo in 1864 was immensely taken with the old market houses at Ypres, such as the Wood Market, the old Hospice, the asylum of forty-seven old ladies looked after by nuns, containing a famous old picture by Broederlam (*c.* 1400), the grand old eighteenth century Hôtel Merghelynck, the Templars' House, the Lombard House, the fine fragment of 1073 in the Portail of St. Pierre, the Hospice Ste. Godelièvre, the Hôtel de Gand, the Chatellenie, the Maison Biebuyck, and fully a score others. The streets are entertaining on account of these relics, which encounter the wanderer unexpectedly at every turn. The industry of the town, as at Bruges, is obvious to the most casual observer, the lace workers frequently sitting out in the street, the old ones often with clay pipes in their mouths! Otherwise

liveliness is not a characteristic of the cobbled ways of Ypres. At Easter, however, it is otherwise, for then in all probability a Kermesse will be in full activity, the roundabouts will play strident music all night, and there will be wonderful processions with man mountains and walking trees. As in the cities of Northern France, the charm of reminiscence is to be found chiefly in the old gateways and the Vauban fortifications. These have altered little since they were closed to exclude or open to receive Turenne or Louis XIV. Ypres was one of the regular skittles of the Roi Soleil. From the grass grown bastions the eye will continually be directed to the great spiral cliff of the Cloth Hall and Belfry, inextricably mingled in outline with the Nieuwerck and the Cathedral. Its pyramidal proportions serve as a magnet to the vision, and all roads at Ypres lead back inevitably by one route or another to the Cloth Hall and the *Tête d'Or* just facing it. 'One could never be weary of surveying its overpowering proportions, its nobility, its unshaken strength, its vast length, and flourishing air. Yet how curious to think that it was now quite purposeless, had no meaning or use! Over four hundred feet long, it was once the seat of bustle and thriving business, for which the building itself was not too large. The hall on the ground seems to stretch from end to end. Here was the great mart for linens —the *toiles flamandes*—once celebrated over Europe. Now desolate is the dwelling of Morna!' A few little local offices transact the stunted, shrunken local business of the place; the post, the municipal offices, each filling up two or three of the arches, in ludicrous

contrast to the unemployed vastness of the rest. It has been fancifully supposed that the name Diaper, as applied to linens, was supplied by this town, which was the seat of the trade, and toile d'Ypres might be supposed, speciously enough, to have some connection with the place.

Among excursions from Ypres, the leisured and sentimental traveller will not omit to seek out Loo, formerly the favoured summer residence of William of Orange, with some old gates and a mediæval Town Hall. A few miles to the south-east is Comines, an old château-town, the birthplace of the Sieur de Comines, the famous historian, and for a time involuntary guest of Louis XI. At Comines the railway divides, one branch going to Armentières the other to Lille, just across the French frontier.

A few miles north of Loo, by paved road and canal, is Dixmude. This small borough has a fine Town Hall, while its church owns a celebrated rood-loft of 1520 in the richest flamboyant manner, a *chef d'œuvre* of Jordaens, 'The Adoration of the Magi' (1644), and a marble font with a bronze extinguisher. Unfortunately, the road from Ypres is cobbled, and there is no cycle track or cinder path. The altarpiece by Jordaens is in his later and darker manner, but rich in colour, shrewdly observed and full of spirit and movement. A few years later Jordaens, who was an Antwerp master and 'the most Flemish painter of his time,' turned Protestant, but this did not prevent him painting altarpieces. There is a painting of the same subject by the same master at Kemmel, six miles from Ypres.

As among the blind the one-eyed man is king, so in this flat region a tump of 500 feet elevation, not much higher than Parliament Hill, is known as a Montagne. From the Belvedere at Kemmel there is a grand panorama ranging from Menin to Cassel. The only neighbouring rival is the Mont des Cats, from which is obtained a view extending to Dunkirk. On the summit of the Mont is an old Trappist monastery.

From Dixmude westward two lines of rail form a V. The southern branch goes to Furnes and Dunkirk, the northern to Nieuport at the mouth of the Yser. A canal joins Furnes and Nieuport. Both are sleepy, quaint, oozy, dull, mossgrown townlets, dreary enough on a grey day, but feasts of splendour for the colourist when there is a fine sunset over the roofs, the canals and the seaward dunes, with ruddy sun-gleams lighting the red sails and watery vapour from the drains. Both are suggestive of such old-world ports as Malden, Sandwich and Rye, but they have more to show in the way of red brick and stone in their respective market-places or Grand' Places with their Hôtel de Ville, Beffroi, Halles and Donjon. The fishiness of the atmosphere at Nieuport has no rival save at Whitby. Furnes is quainter still, it has tapestry and ancient carved doors, a Palais once used by inquisitors, and the lofty, shimmering choir of Sainte-Walburge towering over the Grand' Place—the scene, on the last Sunday of July, of the famous Miracle Play of Furnes, performed on strictly traditional, mediæval lines, and rehearsed, as the York and Coventry plays were, by a confraternity or guild called La Sodalité.

Ypres — Old Shops

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

LIÉGE

CHAPTER VI

LIÉGE

LIÉGE is the third city of Belgium, containing 220,000 souls to the 640,000 of Brussels, the 400,000 of Antwerp, and the 165,000 of Ghent. It is the centre of the mineral district in the Meuse Valley from Huy to Hersthal, and is the capital of Belgium's *couche industrielle.* As Rouen, which it resembles in one or two particulars, is called the Manchester of France, so Liége is called the Birmingham of Belgium. It would be more accurate to call it the Sheffield. There is the same incongruity between the scenery and the smoke. Like the Rhine cities of Cologne and Mayence, or Trèves, Liége was the seat of a prince-bishop, and quarrels between city and bishop, as in old-time Geneva, formed the staple of its history. The summer palace of the bishop at Seraing is now the seat of Cockerill, the Armstrong or Whitworth of Belgium; his winter palace forms the Law Courts. The old cathedral St. Lambert's is named after an almost prehistoric bishop.[1] Charlemagne used Liége as one of his capitals until he gave the preference to Aix-la-Chapelle. Notger, the bishop in the time of our King Canute, made it an

[1] Pépin d'Héristhal had brutally repudiated his wife and taken a mistress (great-grandmother of Charlemagne.) Lambert alone among the prelates denounced Herodias and shared the fate and fame of the Baptist. . . .

important principality and extended its rule over Bouillon and other lordships. Godfrey, the first King of Jerusalem, was Lord of Bouillon (not of Boulogne, as Charles Lamb insisted), and his departure on the Crusade gave the prince-bishop a free hand. He became one of the great financiers of crusading enterprise and obtained recognition as a Prince of the Empire. The wars so thinned the nobles that they could no longer struggle for supremacy. A long struggle ensued between bishop and guild-citizens.

We have a clear picture of the city at this period from the unprejudiced lips of Quentin Durward. The lofty houses—the stately, though narrow and gloomy streets—the splendid display of the richest goods and most gorgeous armour in the warehouses and shops around—the walks crowded by busy citizens of every description, passing and repassing with faces of careful importance or eager bustle—the huge wains, which transported to and fro the subjects of export and import, the former consisting of broadcloth and serge, and arms of all kinds, nails and iron work, while the latter comprehended every article of use or luxury, intended either for the consumption of an opulent city, or received in barter, and destined to be transported elsewhere,—all these objects combined to form an engrossing picture of wealth, bustle and splendour, to which Quentin had hitherto been a stranger. He admired also the various streams and canals, drawn from and communicating with the Maes, which, traversing the city in various directions, offered to every quarter the commercial facilities of water carriage ; and he failed not to hear a

mass in the venerable old Church of St. Lambert, said to have been founded in the eighth century.

About the year 1400 the democratic element had held its own so well that it could be described as 'a city of priests changed into one of colliers and armourers.' 'It was,' we are told, 'a city that gloried in its rupture with the past'; but 'the past' rose and reasserted itself in 1408, when the prince-bishop, John of Bavaria, assisted by his cousin John the Fearless, broke the forces of the citizens and excluded them ruthlessly from power. A generation later democracy triumphed again, again to be overthrown, this time by Charles the Bold of Burgundy, who in 1467 defeated the Liégeois in the field and reinstated his kinsman of Bourbon, the bishop. Yet in 1468 the intrepid burghers rose in fresh revolt, provoked thereto by the sinuous intrigues and anfractuous promises of the crafty Louis XI. of France. Charles got evidence of the intrigue, and had the good luck to lay hands upon his secret enemy at Péronne. He made Louis demonstrate his good faith by accompanying him to Liége and taking a prominent part in the destruction of the democrats whose insurrection he had fomented. As they entered the gates together Louis shouted lustily 'Vive Bourgogne,' to the infinite dismay of his former friends. What a scene for the Historic Ironies and their delineators! Comines, who was an eye-witness of the horrors of the subsequent storm, sack, pillage, and destruction of the city, has a vivid description in the second book of his *Mémoires* of the arrival of the potentates in the suburbs.

'Le lendemain au matin le roy vint loger dedans les

fauxbourgs, en une petite maisonnette, rasibus de celle où estoit logé le duc de Bourgongne ; et avoit avec luy sa garde de cent Escossois, et des gens-d'armes logés assez près de luy en quelque village. Le duc de Bourgongne estoit en grande suspicion, ou que le roy n'entrast dedans la cité, ou qu'il ne s'enfuist avant qu'il eust pris la ville, ou qu'a luy-même ne fist quelque outrage, estant si près.'

When the assault began Louis took up quarters in the Episcopal Palace. He was lavish in his praise of Charles, his courage and good fortune. Let the word be 'Burgundy,' he said to his followers when the attack began. 'Tuez, tuez, Vive Bourgogne.' The banquet was superb after the first day's slaughter, and Charles asked the King of France, his nominal liege lord, how he ought to treat the city of Liége when his soldiers had finished their work. No trace of kindliness towards his old friends was there in the king's answer.

'Once my father had a high tree near his house inhabited by crows, who had built their nests thereon and disturbed his repose by their chatter. He had the nests removed, but the crows returned and built anew. Several times was this repeated. Then he had the tree cut down at the roots. After that my father slept quietly.'

Four or five days passed before Louis dared press the question of his return home.

November 2 is the date of Louis's departure. It needs no stretch of the imagination to believe the words of his little Swiss page, Diesback, when he says that on reaching French soil Louis dismounted and kissed the ground in a paroxysm of joy that he was his own man again.

We must turn now from *Quentin Durward* to *Anne of Geierstein.* Evil days fell upon Burgundy. Granson, Morat and Nancy followed in quick succession, and the dream of founding a buffer-state between France and the Empire, from Basel to Antwerp, crumbled in the dust. Louis of Bourbon, supported by the Pope, succeeded in restoring some order to the city's affairs, and might have done better had he not been assassinated by our old friend—so vividly imagined by Sir Walter—the Wild Boar of the Ardennes. During Charles V.'s day Liége did not reassert itself, but prosperity was returning under one of the Wild Boar's progeny, Eberhard de la Marck (d. 1538), and the bishop was too much of a Christian to take any part in the wars of religion. The seventeenth century was ushered in by furious factions between the old Chartists and the Episcopalians. After fierce struggles the Bavarian bishop invoked the emperor, and a large German force captured the city. A severe proscription followed, and the bishop built the citadel on the summit of St. Walburga's Mont. This bishop, Max Henry of Bavaria, abolished the old charter and all the city's free institutions and guild privileges. Henceforth to 1790 the prince-bishops retained their power, and manœuvred for neutrality during the Cockpit period. In spite of these efforts the citadel was taken by Marlborough in 1702 and the Dutch held it for fifteen years. Seventy-five years later the principality was overrun by the French. From '94 to the fall of Napoleon it was annexed to the French Empire and became the Department of the Ourthe. The Congress of Vienna handed it over to William of Orange, King of the Netherlands.

In 1830 the Liégois fought heroically for national independence. Hence their important place in the modern kingdom of Belgium.

Liége has a special place in Belgium as capital of the Walloon district. Although it formerly belonged to the Empire and Germany, it has long been the headquarters of French-speaking Belgium and the Latin influence generally. Belgium, it must always be borne in mind, contains two peoples distinct in physical type, aptitude, ideas and temper—the Flemings and the Walloons. These two distinct peoples are separated by a border-line which has wavered very little for hundreds of years, running through the kingdom from Mouscron to Tongres. The Flemings, patient, tenacious, devout, are a people of small husbandmen, fishermen, and merchants. The northern provinces, Antwerp, Flanders East and West, and Limburg, are theirs, also the best part of Brabant. The Walloons occupy the rest of Brabant and also Hainault, Namur, Liége and Luxemburg, and are mainly artisans, miners, and foresters—a lively people, sceptical and mutinous by tradition. The Walloons have been soldiers, the Flemings citizens. Van der Weyden was really a Walloon, but most of the big painters were Flemings. The language difficulty really divides them. About half speak Flemish, half Walloon (a North French dialect), and relatively few speak both, as they do in other bilingual countries. The Walloons refuse to learn Flemish. The revolution of 1830 was a victory for them and their speech. Perhaps they abused it somewhat. Now legal equality is secured between French

and Flemish. But the Flemish are inclined to be the aggressive party now, and the spoils of victory are the universities, which have hitherto been strongholds of French influence. In this linguistic duel, needless to say, there are interested observers on both frontiers. It is to Germany's interest that the Flemish movement should develop and become more markedly exclusive. Contrariwise, France cannot but view with rising apprehension the decline of her influence in Belgium. The agitation has gone to the length of demanding the creation of Flemish regiments in the Belgian army, officered by Flemings, and obeying the word of command in Flemish only! The Fleming movement has certainly to some extent played into the hands of the Pan-Germans, but that it will do so any longer is improbable. Liége for ten years has been at the head of the Walloon movement intended to glorify Belgian nationalism, to raise the status of the French language, and to resist the encroachments of Low German language and ideals.

On other grounds too, apart from the proud and rather aggressive particularism of its artisans, Liége has a somewhat distinctive position. Outwardly it is just merely one of the nine provincial capitals. But on account of the distinct historic past that it has had as a principality, by reason of its splendid and dominant position strategically, as the seat of a University, a Court of Appeal, and the home of a famous Violin Conservatoire, in addition to being the largest French-speaking town in the country, Liége has always held its head at least as high as Antwerp and Brussels.

Yet in spite of all these titles Liége has nothing very

much in the way of architectural pre-eminence to correspond to the great cities of Flanders. The four bridges over the Meuse constitute an architectural feature, however. On the west of the river is the fine Boulevard of Orban bounded on the north by the University building, and on the west, running parallel with this one, the Square and Avenue d'Avroy and the Boulevard Sauvenière [see Spa]. The Square contains bronze statues of Charlemagne, the three Pepins and Charles Martel. Adjacent are the Conservatoire and the Hôtel Charlemagne, one of the temples of the Belgian Amphitryon. In this caravansary of abundant cheer is said to have occurred the retort of the Frenchman who, approached by the Belgian with the conciliatory observation, 'Je vois que vous êtes Français, Monsieur, parceque vous mangez beaucoup du pain,' replied, 'Je vois que vous êtes Belge, Monsieur, parceque vous mangez beaucoup du tout.' Like most of the natives of the Baltic States the Belgian has the reputation of being an excellent trencherman. Under the same roof candour compels me to state that I met a Swede who gave the palm in this respect to the English on the strength of a presumed English weakness for morning draughts, elevens's, a big tea at five, and post-prandial snack with tea or coffee at ten in the evening. Another personal recollection of Liége is one of a temporary panic at a fête, in which a collapsed Chinese lantern ignited a portentous accumulation of confetti, and led to those behind crying forward while those in front cried back, to the momentary confusion and even danger of a very densely packed crowd of pleasure-seekers. The

scenes in all these industrial cities of the workpeople from the Borinage arriving for their holidays and returning to their mining villages in packed trains are strongly reminiscent of the Lancashire Wakes.

The ancient Cathedral of St. Lambert is now no more, but there are at least four churches in Liége of architectural interest or at least pretension. The Church of Paul, raised to the dignity of a Cathedral in 1802, was built mainly in 1280 as regards the choir and 1528 as regards the nave, which contains a good deal of Renaissance detail of merit; St. Barthélemy, a basilica of the twelfth century, with two striking Romanesque towers and a splendid font in bronze, cast at Dinant in 1192, transferred from the old cathedral—Belgium is rather famous for its fonts, and those manufactured at Tournai in the second half of the twelfth century were widely exported; St. Martin, a basilica of the tenth century as originally founded by Bishop Heraclius, but rebuilt in the Gothic style of 1542 with a tower commanding a very fine view over the valleys of Ourthe and Meuse, with the lavish distribution of the city between them; and the Church of St. Jacques, with a Romanesque tower, but dating structurally from the date of our Henry VIII., and resembling in some details the familiar Church of St. Ouen. For light, beauty, economy and capacity it is a model for a parish church in a populous city which deserves the emulation of all admirers of Late Gothic. The detail is not conspicuous in interest, perhaps, but as a model of architectural efficiency, with its noble polygonal choir and chapels, it is by far the most interesting ecclesiastical monument in Liége.

A description of Liége would hardly be complete to-day without a note upon the fortifications and outlying forts. They were described two years ago by Mr. Belloc in a passage which has now become almost a classic of prophetic significance. But we can here only excerpt a short passage of description.

'The works round Liége consist of twelve isolated forts forming the most perfect and most formidable ring of defences in Europe or in the world. The ideal ring-fortress would be in a town capable of amply provisioning and lying within an exact circle of heights at an average of some 8000 yards' distance, each with a self-contained closed work, and each such work within support of at least two others. No such absolutely exact conditions exist, of course, in reality, but skill and the relief of the soil combined have endowed Liége with a ring of forts very nearly combining these conditions. The circle, though not exact, is more nearly exact than in the case of any other ring-fortress. Its largest diameter is not 20 per cent. in excess of its shortest. The greatest existence between any two works is but 7000 yards, the average less than 4000. Each work is easily supported by two others, and often by three, and in one case by four.'

MONS, CHARLEROI AND SPA

CHAPTER VII

MONS, CHARLEROI AND SPA

MONS is almost a metropolis of Belgium in its capacity of cockpit of Europe. It stands roughly midway between Lille and Tournai west, and Charleroi and Namur east. In this area the battlefields of Belgium will be found to be most thickly strewn. This of course is no matter of accident. The Netherlands are in the angle, as it were, in the flat frontier between France and Germany. From Basel roughly to Namur, the Rhine, Vosges, Argonne, Meuse, Ardennes serve as natural barriers. Near the North Sea the land is terribly broken by canal, waterway, indentation and marsh. But fifty miles south of the ocean there is an intervening fairway for easy going on a big scale for Exercitus between the wooded hills that rise as they go south and the broken and difficult belt already referred to. Thus South Belgium forms a kind of defile. Armies march to and fro here moving north-east or south-west, and here they necessarily collide. On this land in the eighteenth century were the frontier fortresses designed to protect the Netherlands from the ambition of France. These fortresses were known as the Barrier. England always regarded this Barrier as being about the most sacred thing in all Europe. Cæsar erected a fortress at Mons in his campaign

against the Gauls. A good contour map reveals why. Later it became the capital of Hainault. The Burgundians made a stronghold of it. The Prince of Orange managed to take it in 1572 from the Spaniards.

On the 23rd of May one of the Nassau leaders appeared at the gates, accompanied by three wagons, ostensibly containing merchandise, but in reality laden with arquebuses. These were secretly distributed among confederates in the city. In the course of the day the 'Reformed' Count Louis arrived in the neighbourhood, accompanied by 500 horsemen and 1000 foot. This force he stationed close-concealed within the thick forests between Maubeuge and Mons. Towards evening he sent twelve of the most trusty and daring of his followers, disguised as wine merchants, into the city. These worthies proceeded boldly to a public-house, ordered their supper, and while conversing with the landlord, carelessly inquired at what hour next morning the city gates would be opened. They were informed that the usual hour was four in the morning, but that a trifling present to the porter would ensure admission, if they desired it, at an earlier hour. They explained their inquiries by a statement that they had some casks of wine which they wished to introduce into the city before sunrise. Having obtained all the information which they needed, they soon afterwards left the tavern. The next day they presented themselves very early at the gate, which the porter, on promise of a handsome 'drink-penny,' agreed to unlock. No sooner were the bolts withdrawn, however, than he was struck dead, while about fifty dragoons rode

Louvain — Béguinage

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through the gates. The Count and his followers now galloped over the city in the morning twilight, shouting, 'France! Liberty! the town is ours!' 'The Prince is coming!' 'Down with the tenth penny; down with the murderous Alva!' So soon as a burgher showed his wondering face at the window, they shot at him with their carbines. They made as much noise, and conducted themselves as boldly as if they had been at least a thousand strong.

Meantime, however, the streets remained empty, not one of their secret confederates showing himself. Fifty men could surprise, but were too few to keep possession of the city. The Count began to suspect a trap. As daylight approached the alarm spread; the position of the little band was critical. In his impetuosity, Louis had far outstripped his army, but they had been directed to follow hard upon his footsteps, and he was astonished that their arrival was so long delayed. The suspense becoming intolerable, he rode out of the city in quest of his adherents, and found them wandering in the woods, where they had completely lost their way. Ordering each horseman to take a foot soldier on the crupper behind him, he led them rapidly back to Mons. On the way they were encountered by La Noue 'with the iron arm,' and Genlis, who meantime had made an unsuccessful attack to recover Valenciennes, which within a few hours had been won and lost again. As they reached the gates of Mons they found themselves within a hair's-breadth of being too late, their adherents had not come forth; the citizens had been aroused, the gates were all fast but one, and there the

porter was quarrelling with a French soldier about an arquebuse. The drawbridge across the moat was at the moment rising; the last entrance was closing when Guitoy de Chaumont, a French officer, mounted on a light Spanish barb, sprang upon the bridge as it rose. His weight caused it to sink again, the gate was forced, and Louis with all his men rode triumphantly into the town. Unfortunately, Alva captured the city again in September, and the slaughter of Protestants was terrible. The fortress and town remained Spanish down to 1714, with French intervals 1691-1697, 1700-1707. It changed hands several times during the Spanish Succession War, and few cities have been more fought over. Malplaquet, for instance, was fought on August 31, 1709, by Boufflers and Villars in the hope of relieving Mons. The Allies, largely owing to the rashness of the Prince of Orange, lost 20,000 men, the heaviest sufferers after the Dutch Blues being the Coldstreams and the Buffs. The French, who were powerfully entrenched, lost not much more than 12,000, but in spite of Villars's bluster about such a victory of the Allies being really a defeat, the French had to retreat and abandon Mons to its fate. The French got it again after Fontenoy and then after Jenappes, which is between Malplaquet and Mons. The Duke of York was badly defeated by Pichegru hard by in 1794. Truly Mons is a name of direful sound to the soldier!

Yet Mons itself is strangely oblivious of its terrible and sanguinary connotation in history. It appears to-day in the light of a self-contained and self-complacent little town, the centre of a populous mining

neighbourhood, a typical Walloon city, proud of its individuality. It is celebrated locally for its fair and its fêtes! The Cathedral is a fine example of northern Gothic of the latest Decorated period. The Beffroi, which dominates it, was built by the Spanish in 1662 and restored in 1864. Up in this lofty stone cage sing the thirty-six blackbirds of the famous 'carion de Mons.' In the porch is stabled the Golden Car of the patron, Sainte-Waudru, daughter of Walbert, a Count of Hainault in the seventh century, who founded a convent here. The Chasse of Sainte-Waudru is celebrated here annually at the Fête of the Lumeçon—an absurd mime representing the Duel of Saint George against a mighty Snail or fabulous monster, known as the Doudou. Everything in Mons is dated from this festival, and it is a popular saying that Paris would be the first city in the world if only it had a Doudou. Like the famous Mallard of All Souls, Oxford, the Doudou has been provocative of much admired doggerel, sung in its honour in the early hours of Trinity Sunday.

'Nous vions vir l'car d'or
A la porcession dé Mon;
Ce s'ra l'poupée Saint-Georg
Qui no' suivra di long;
C'est l'doudou, c'est l'mama,
C'est l'poupée, poupée, poupée
C'est l'doudou, c'est l'mama.
C'est l'poupée Saint-Georg' qui va.'

The Hôtel de Ville at Mons, though small, is piquant and attractive. Its construction was adopted in 1459. In 1462 the clerk and master-mason of

Douai came to report progress. In June 1465, the Bailly of Hainault, Sire Pinckard of Hérimelz, their ladies, several canonesses of Saint-Waudru and their officials, visited the 'nouviel ouvraige de la maison de le paix.' And the Magistrate offered these personages a refection consisting of wine, spices, fruits and other delicacies. The Hôtel was finished in 1467. Ten years later a powder explosion laid it low in great part; whereupon Mathieu de Layens was summoned from Louvain in 1479 to repair and rebuild the structure. The Tour à horloge, one of the most striking features of the town, was destroyed by fire in September 1548 and rebuilt on strictly Renaissance lines in 1552.

CHARLEROI

Charleroi, the centre of all the industrial district which stretches from Lodelinsart to Châtelet, gives one almost the sensation of one of those Californian cities which emerge from the earth in a single night. Quite new and yet decrepit, without youth and without freshness, here all the pride of the eye, and symptoms of external prosperity and continuity are sacrificed to the exigencies of an existence which puts business easily above all else. Spread out on the slopes of a hill, with a high town and a low town separated by the muddy waters of the Sambre, it discards its tradition of war and adventures behind the cold and sombre aspect of the smoke-laden modern city, which has no time to think of glory or pleasure, and which puts up houses for sheer temporary utility.

CHARLEROI

Charles II. of Spain built a fortress upon the actual site of Charleroi on the Sambre in 1666, and to this he gave his own name. Louis XIV. captured it in the following year, and built the lower town on the river bank. The peace of Nimeguen restored it to Spain in 1678, and for a century after that it oscillated perpetually between France and Belgium. From 1794 to 1814 it naturally was part of France. Napoleon made it the secret objective of his expeditionary army in the Waterloo campaign. His idea was to assemble his forces with all possible secrecy in the neighbourhood of Charleroi on 15th June. He fixed his headquarters there, and during the first stage of the concentration all went well. Three days later Charleroi was lost to France 'for ever.' At the present time Charleroi is an important railway, canal and industrial centre. It is a local capital of the coke and coal industry of Belgium. It provides most of the fuel for the Cockerill and other great foundries in and around Liège. To say it is an attractive place would not be strictly accurate. Battlefields (Ligny, Fleurus), furnaces, foundries, glass works and tall chimneys are the most prominent features of the landscape. Near at hand are Chimay, with its beautiful park and statue of Froissart, the inimitable chronicler of chivalry, who died at Chimay in 1410; Binche, a pretty little town of lace-makers; and the stern fortress of Givet, once a name of terror to English prisoners, where Peter Simple and his friend O'Brien were imprisoned, and whence they escaped, some eleven decades ago.

SPA

Spa is said to owe its name to an old word *espa*, meaning fountain or spring. The Romans probably knew its waters. But the properties of its springs were presumably rediscovered about the time of our Edward I. In 1326 a merchant of Breda called Le Loup obtained a concession here from Adolf de la Marck, and while engaged in developing the sale of his woods, built a house by one of these springs. His remarkable recovery from very bad to very good health attracted pilgrims. Shops, dwellings, and a market rapidly sprang up. In 1577 Marguerite de Valois chose the place as a quiet hermitage in time of impending civil war, and was impressed by the salubrious properties of the place. Among other notable visitors, it will suffice to enumerate Gustavus of Sweden (1780), Joseph II., Prince Henry of Prussia, the Emperor Paul, Madame de Stael, Leopold II. and Orleans princes without number, and a vast host of nobility and gentry. The deities of Spa exact one local sacrifice—a pilgrimage to the Tour des Fontaines. It shows off the features of the shallow valley with its demicircles of woods, heaths and heathery ridges exceedingly well. The three springs are the Tonnelet, which produces a gaseous fountain not unlike Apollinaris; second, the Sauvenière, an acid and rather ferruginous water, which loses a slight sulphurous odour it has very rapidly; and third, the Géronstère, less ferruginous, with more of the smell of sulphuretted hydrogen. All the springs have their votive offerings. Here is a brief sketch of 'Spaw' as

it appeared to travellers from England sixty years since.

'The Spa in those days, though "the Spaw" *par excellence*, and the first of Continental baths frequented by foreign fashion, was decidedly primitive. I have said that the hotels have never been first class, and then they were at least as good as they are now. What struck you at once was the exceedingly homely arrangements of the gaming establishments, where in generations gone by the frequenters of White's and Brook's, Watier's and Crockford's, had lost fabulous sums when taking a course of the springs for gout or dyspepsia. In a long and rather ill-lighted room was a range of tables to suit any taste. At one end was a display of the leading and local journals, from the other came the ceaseless click of the roulette ball, and the cry of the croupier at Rouge-et-Noir—'Messieurs, faites votre jeu. Le jeu est fait.' You were looking through letters of the *Times* correspondents—there were no telegrams in those days—or immersed in the columns of *Galignani* when *Galignani* was really Parisian and interesting, but for the life of you, you could not help lending an ear to the distractions of the tables. Involuntarily your fingers trifled with the Napoleons or five-franc pieces in your pockets; you strolled to the other end of the room: you staked, and you lost them.'

But at Spa, as at Baden, with sporting taste and a certain self-control, you could lead a double life. At Baden the seductions of the Black Forest and its streams rivalled those of the Kursaal. You could put on

shooting-boots and slip into your rough toilet at the back door, to come back with a keen appetite for late dinner, or you could don patent leathers and a shiny suit of white twills, and fritter away time and money through the afternoon, ruining the digestion with ices and absinthe.

So at Spa, the attractions of the Ardennes were great. 'You do not lose yourself at once, as at Baden, among forest glades, with beds of bracken and carpets of bilberries under colonnades of secular firs. But the scenery has a savage character of its own, the more striking for its contrast with the cultivated flats of Flanders. There was something of witchery in the very names of a region so rich in legend and tradition. If one thought nothing of St. Hubert or the Quatre Fils d'Aymon, you knew it had been touched by the magic of Shakespeare, and you remembered *Quentin Durward* and the lair of the Wild Boar. It was delightful to ride or drive on the rugged heaths and inhale the invigorating air. But I am bound to say that when fishing was the object, the expeditions were generally a dead failure. Each of them was a triumph of undying hope over sad experience. You stabled the pony and hurriedly put up the rod, that you might not lose a moment of a most favourable day. Nothing could be more tempting than the look of the water, with its pools and rushes and swirling backflows, but, like the emerald streams of the Pyrenees, it was cruelly deceptive, the reason being, that with the demand for trout at Spa, it was systematically poached and methodically netted.

'The wild shooting, on the contrary, was capital, and there was no great difficulty in getting permission,

Louvain — The Cathedral

[illegible] at the back [illegible] with a keen appetite for the dinner, [illegible] and a shiny suit of white [illegible] time and money through the [illegible] the digestion with [illegible] headache. [illegible] of the Antwerpers were great. [illegible] himself at once, or in fishing, among [illegible] with beds of bamboo and [illegible] of [illegible] of [illegible]. [illegible] the [illegible]. There was something of mystery in the [illegible] and tradition. [illegible] at the Quatre Fils [illegible] by the magic of Shakespeare, [illegible] Quentin Durward and the lair of the Wild Boar. It was delightful to ride [illegible] the rugged [illegible] the overgrowing [illegible]. But I am bound to say that when fishing was the object, the expeditions were generally a dead failure. Each of them was a triumph of undying hope over sad experience. [illegible] and [illegible] put up the rod, [illegible] a moment of a most favourable [illegible]. Nothing could be more tempting than the look of the water, with its pools and rather [illegible] swirling backflows [illegible] the emerald [illegible], the reason being that with the [illegible], it was systematically poached and [illegible] netted.

The [illegible] shooting, on the contrary, was capital, and there was no great difficulty in getting permission,

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

if you made friends with a local landowner at the *table d'hôte* or on the promenade. Then the Belgian sportsmen were pleased to make acquaintance with an English shooter, and though they stuck to strange ways and shot over queer dogs, which they held in the very highest estimation, they were all on the lookout for a British wrinkle. One of the pleasantest days I ever had was in late autumn, when I offered a gentleman a lift who was plodding Spa-wards with guns and game-bag. The bag was pretty well stuffed. I expressed my admiration, and he delicately condoled with me on an empty fishing-basket. My motives were mixed when I asked him to dine, but that dinner was an excellent investment. Before we parted I had accepted a pressing invitation and made an appointment. He welcomed me at a little inn, and insisted on "calling the bill" for a capital breakfast. It was rough shooting, but carefully watched, for the Belgians, even in the Ardennes, as in the highly cultivated farms of Brabant, were jealous of any infringement of their rights. We were attended by an old *chasseur*, as familiar with the game, their haunts and their habits, as any village *shikari* in Indian jungles. We bagged hares, partridges, a brace of wild pheasants, a leash of woodcock and sundry snipe. It was the first week in October, so there was only one belated quail; but the contents of the bag show the character of the country. Nothing could be prettier, from the keen sportsman's point of view. There were heaths and morasses, coppices of the water-loving alder and hanging coverts in the valleys, where the brooks would occasionally stagnate in swamps—resorts of the

snipe and breeding-places of the wild duck. At that time shootings of the kind could be rented fabulously cheaply. The banker could generally refer you to some land-agent or solicitor, who was well informed on the subject. I knew of one case where a man got fifty brace of partridges and half as many hares, to say nothing of rabbits, snipe and waterfowl, on a shooting, for which he paid 150 francs, renewing the lease through successive seasons. Nor was that exceptional, and the rabbity dunes and sandhills went for next to nothing; but I doubt if the same could be said now.'

Spa was the first of its kind in Europe, before Baden Baden, or Marienbad, or Wiesbaden, or Tunbridge Wells, or Bath, but combining by anticipation many of the characteristics of them all. The centre of attraction, of course, was the gaming-tables, at which most of Thackeray and Lever's military heroes disported themselves. When they were done away with, the glory of Spa departed, and good King Leopold transferred the light of his countenance to Ostend.

NAMUR, DINANT, LOUVAIN AND AERSCHOT

CHAPTER VIII

NAMUR, DINANT, LOUVAIN AND AERSCHOT

IN the Province of Namur there are no towns of the same degree of importance as those in Brabant and Flanders, but it contains one of the most picturesque stretches of the valley of the Meuse. A writer of the last century who describes this beautiful district, says: 'Neat and thriving villages, with substantial farmhouses and pretty cottages, are scattered on all sides; and richly cultivated, thronged by a healthy and contented peasantry, afford unequivocal indications of the flourishing state of things. The valley of the Meuse, which runs in a north-eastern direction from Namur to Liège, and southward from Namur, through Dinant, to the borders of France, exhibits all the beautiful and rich variety which river scenery is calculated to produce. On the right bank a range of bold and rugged rocks shoots up from the very bed of the stream, sometimes presenting a wild and barren front, sometimes decked with ivy and the wild myrtle, and covered to their very summit with a variety of vegetation. The left bank affords a pleasing contrast in a continued succession of elegant mansions, castellated towers, and ruined abbeys; and here a romantic glen, there a cultivated garden, stretching down to the very verge of the stream, completes a scene of the most enchanting

loveliness. With all this picturesque beauty, this is, moreover, one of the richest mining districts in the kingdom; nor does the working of the minerals materially detract from the natural grandeur of the scene.'

Namur is said to derive its name from an idol named Nam, probably Neptune, whose worship was forbidden and whose priests were silenced by St. Maternus, a disciple of St. Peter. Hence the name of Nam-maturn, which was gradually corrupted into Namurcum and Namur.

Namur, the capital of the province, is a bright town, with wide streets and pleasant boulevards, a park and some prettily laid-out public walks. During the summer months it is much resorted to by the people from the numerous surrounding towns and villages, on account of its charming position and other attractions. From a casual inspection one would scarcely realise Namur as an important manufacturing centre, but such it is, the principal industry of the town being its famous cutlery.

Situated at the confluence of the rivers Meuse and Sambre, it presents a very striking appearance; the great citadel, which commands the town, rises from the height of a precipitous cliff, and its advantages were long ago recognised as a position of great strategic importance.

The fortress is supposed to occupy the site of a stronghold of the Aduatuci mentioned by Cæsar in his *Gallic War*. Known as Namucum in the seventh century, a fort was constructed here a thousand years later by Cahorn, the famous Dutch engineer, and in

1672 it was taken by Louis XIV. after a siege of six days. He subsequently strengthened the position, but Namur did not hold out against the Prince of Orange, afterwards our William III., three years later, when he besieged the fort at the head of the Allied Army. Motley says that next to the Battle of the Boyne, this was his greatest victory, and he commemorated it by erecting the Fort d'Orange—better known as the Devil's Castle. Sterne has immortalised this engagement in the pages of *Tristram Shandy*.

The importance of this stronghold was recognised during the French Revolution, when the existing fort was erected. Later, after the establishment of the kingdom of the Netherlands, it was strengthened under the supervision of the Duke of Wellington against French invasion. The fortress itself having become obsolete, with a view to protecting the town and the valley of the Meuse, a chain of forts was begun in 1882, of the type introduced by General Brialmont.

In 1046 Albert, Count of Namur, founded a chapter here of twenty canons, which Pope Stephen X. subsequently confirmed. It was erected into a cathedral under the patronage of St. Auban or St. Alban, a priest and martyr whose relics were conveyed from Mayence and deposited here. The belfry is the only portion that remains of the older church. The present structure, of brick, was built between the years 1751 and 1772, from designs by Pizzoni, a Milanese architect, after, it is said, the model of St. Peter's at Rome. The dome is lofty, and at the west end there is a portico supported by twenty Corinthian pillars. The statues of St. Peter and St. Paul,

in Carrara marble, by Laurent Delvaux of Ghent, which stand at the sides of the high altar, formerly belonged to the abbey of Floreffe. This abbey, now in ruins, is about five miles from the town ; it was founded in 1121 by Godfrey, Count of Namur.

A monument in the cathedral is also to be seen, to the memory of Don John of Austria, the son of the Emperor Charles V. and Margaret of Audenarde. Don John, the conqueror of Lepanto and one of the favoured suitors of Queen Elizabeth, was a man of many attainments and of great popularity. He unfortunately incurred the displeasure and jealousy of his half-brother Philip, who is supposed to have contrived his death by poison, which occurred in his camp near Bouge on 20th August 1578. This monument to Don John, which consists of a black marble slab, was erected by Alexander Farnese to his *Amatissimo avunculo*, and is situated behind the high altar, beneath which his heart and garments were buried, though his body lies in the Escurial. In the treasury of the cathedral is preserved a jewelled golden crown of 1429, an early statuette of St. Blaise, and some other valuable objects, including gold and silver crosses and reliquaries.

It is hardly surprising that the churches and other public buildings in Namur are not very ancient, considering that the town has so often been battered by sieges and other misfortunes. St. Loup, perhaps the most interesting church in the town, is in the Baroque style, and was built by the Jesuits between the years 1621 and 1653. The exterior is imposing ; inside, the vaulted roof is supported by twelve rose-coloured marble

Louvain — Entrance to the Cloister

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pillars with black marble Ionic capitals, and pedestals. The bold carving of the ceiling was executed by a monk, who performed his task lying on his back supported by a scaffold, his eyes being protected, from the dust as he worked, by glasses. A hole is pointed out in the vaulted roof as having been made by a cannon ball during the siege of the town in the time of Louis XIV. The chancel is lined with rose-coloured marble, with cornices and niches of black marble. The oak wainscoting and the elaborately carved confessionals formerly belonged to the Jesuits.

The Rev. William Trollope, from whom we have already quoted, says: 'In the neighbourhood of Namur are many objects of interest to the tourist and antiquarian. The Château of Mozet, Tombes, Arville, and Faux, and the ruins of the Abbey of Grand-Pré, are all within four miles of the town, and a little farther in the same direction are the remains of Fort Sanson, which is supposed to have been built before the conquest of the Gauls by Julius Cæsar. About six miles to the south-west is the village of Ligny, near which was fought the memorable battle between the French and Prussians, on the 16th June 1815. Three miles southward, in a narrow defile surrounded by rugged rocks, is the Abbey of Marlaigne, founded by St. Berthuin, A.D. 685; and ten miles higher up the river is the town of Dinant, formerly a place of considerable importance and great military strength. It is supposed to derive its name from the goddess Diana, who had a temple in the vicinity. The town is built at the foot of a rock, on the summit of which stood the strong castle of Montor-

gueil, which was demolished in the early part of the fifteenth century. That which now occupies its site was built in 1530, by Erard de la Marcke, bishop-prince of Liége ; and it has been repaired, within a few years, by the Government. A beautiful bridge across the Meuse bears an inscription, which records the fact of its being built—"*Ce pont a été fait ici*" ; but *when* or by *whom*, the record does not say. The town was formerly divided into nine parishes, of which some of the churches are still in use ; but the principal one, dedicated to Our Lady, is alone worthy of attention. An Englishman named Strickland built the Hôtel de Ville, which was sometime a residence of the bishops of Liége.

'The environs of Dinant are exceedingly picturesque. Among other objects of interest are the Château du Freyr, with its remarkable grotto ;—the ruins of an ancient tower at Bouvignes, which was built in 1321 by one of the noble family of Grevecœur, and rendered remarkable by the self-devotion, in 1554, of three young wives, who, when their husbands had fallen in battle, threw themselves from the top of the rock on which it stands, that they might not fall into the hands of the enemy ;—the Castle of Celle, built in the seventh century ;—and that of Beauraing, which was besieged by Philip the Good, in 1445. At Han-sur-Lesse, about sixteen miles south-east of Dinant, on the road to Luxembourg, the famous grotto, called Hans' Hole, is one of those natural curiosities which are rare as they are wonderful. The little river Lesse, dashing over its rocky bed, is lost for a time in the interior of the mountain, from whence it issues

again in a calm and tranquil stream, at the distance of somewhat more than half a mile from the spot at which it disappears. Short as the distance is in a right line, it occupies from thirteen to fourteen hours in traversing the winding recesses of its hidden channel, as may be proved by the simple experiment of throwing a piece of wood into the foaming torrent above, and watching its exit at the lower extremity. When the waters of the Lesse are more than ordinarily swollen, they enter the mountain at a second opening at a greater elevation, which at other times, and always during the summer, may be safely explored. Long narrow corridors, along which it is frequently necessary to crawl, lead to different chambers; of one of which, called from its form the Grotto of the Dome, the dimensions are enormous. Stalactites hang from the roof in endless variety, and stalagmites rise from the ground; of these some few have all the brilliancy of crystal. From one of the stalagmites, which has an extraordinary height of twelve feet by as many in breadth, the chamber in which it rises is called the Grotto of the Trophy. The Grotto of Issue, which is of an oval form, and covered with stalactites of the most dazzling brightness, may be entered in a boat. If a gun be discharged at the entrance of the cavern, the report is deafening, and the reverberation is prolonged for a considerable time along the windings and recesses of the mountain.'

The narrow valley of the Meuse from Namur to Dinant is enclosed by wooded hills, and at intervals with magnificent limestone cliffs, enlivened with many picturesque villages and villas. The river is navigable,

and its beauty is enhanced by the presence of a number of small islands.

Dinant is something more than a mere fashionable river resort; it possesses many objects of historical interest. The town lies at the foot of limestone cliffs, on the top of which stands the fortress, where a fine view of the town and valley can be obtained. The Gothic parish church of Notre Dame, with its pear-shaped spire, is an outstanding feature of the town. Erected in the thirteenth century, it was much injured in 1227 by the fall of a piece of the cliff close to which it stands. It was practically rebuilt from 1581 to 1590, and restored at the end of the seventeenth century. It underwent further restoration in 1707 and in 1855; it therefore can show but few traces of the early Transition period. The building is small and consists of three naves; the baptistry, which is early and may have formed a part of the original church, contains an ancient font, probably dating from the twelfth century. Behind the high altar is one still older, dedicated to Perpetuo, Bishop of Tongres in the sixth century. The interesting south portal belongs to the thirteenth century, and has a tympanum filled with five arches diminishing in width from the centre. The church possesses two pictures by Wiertz, who was born at Dinant in 1806, the subjects being 'The Virgin of the Chair,' by Raphael, and 'We shall find each other in heaven.' A few other pictures by Wiertz are to be seen in the Town Hall, an eighteenth-century building standing close to the river, which was formerly occupied by the ecclesiastics of the Principality on their visitations to Dinant.

Philip le Bon, Duke of Burgundy, incensed by the insubordinate attitude of the people of Dinant, marched against the town in 1467 with his son, Charles the Bold, besieged and captured it. He pillaged the town, burnt it and destroyed the walls, and then punished the inhabitants, by causing 800 of them to be thrown into the river, while he looked on. Dinant was again taken and plundered in 1554, this time by the French under the Duc de Nevers. It suffered a similar fate from the French in 1675.

LOUVAIN

When Brussels was merely a rising town, and long before it became the capital of Brabant, Louvain was the principal city of the Duchy, with a population amounting to nearly 200,000 souls. But in our own day it had fallen to less than a quarter of that number of inhabitants, and the boundary of the old walls now enclose large spaces of arable land. In the fourteenth century the walls that Matthew de Layens built round Louvain were protected by forty towers, and had a circuit of nearly five miles. As in the case of many other Belgian towns that have declined, the ramparts have been converted into pleasant promenades. The town itself, like Bruges and Ghent, is a survival of the past, and the shrinkage in the outskirts of Louvain is especially noticeable. The height of its prosperity was reached in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when the town was the place of residence of the Dukes of Brabant and the seat of a university providing for 6000 students. It was, moreover,

a great centre of the cloth trade and other industries, supporting some 2000 manufactories.

The river Dyle flows through Louvain, and adds to the picturesque character of its irregular streets, but the principal attractions of the town are its churches and other mediæval buildings.

The Hôtel de Ville, a magnificent example of florid Late Gothic, stands in the Grand' Place, where three of its sides can be seen. It was built by Matthew de Layens between the years 1448 and 1463, and comprises three stories or rows of ten windows with pointed arches. From both ends rise three octagonal open towers with spires, that is to say, one from each of the four corners, and one from the summit of the two gable ends. The high sloping roof on both sides contain four rows of ten dormer windows. The façade is so profusely sculptured as to give the appearance of a fine piece of Chinese carving: between the windows are statues which are supported by bosses, also elaborately wrought. On the ground floor at the centre are two entrance portals approached by a semicircular staircase.

From a former Hôtel de Ville, during a popular rising in 1378, thirteen magistrates met their death by being projected from the windows, while the people in the square below received their bodies on the points of their picks. The rebellion was, however, suppressed by Wenceslas, Duke of Brabant, who exacted the most humiliating submission from the culprits. The nobles from this time increased in power and tyranny, whereupon a large proportion of the citizens withdrew

from the city to Holland and England, and carried with them the trade and industries of Louvain.

As a University town and an important seat of Catholic learning, Louvain survived its reputation as a commercial centre. Founded in 1426, the University pursued a dignified course until it was closed by the French in 1797. Under the Dutch government it was revived in 1817, but finally given up, after the Belgians gained their independence, in 1834. Two years later it was reorganised and converted into a Catholic University. Among the illustrious men who have been educated here was the Emperor Charles V. The present building, erected in 1317 by the cloth-makers as a warehouse, and known as Les Halles, was taken over by the University in 1679. The library, one of the most valuable in Belgium, contains 70,000 volumes and 400 manuscripts.

The Church of St. Pierre, which stands opposite the Hôtel de Ville, is an imposing Late Gothic building, with a fine west front and an unfinished tower. It was erected in 1430 on the site of an older church dating from 1040. Inside, the fine rood screen, which separates the choir, is noticeable; it is in the flamboyant Gothic style, was put up in 1450, and consists of three arches surmounted by a crucifixion with Our Lady and St. John, also a carved balustrade with figures of the Saviour, Our Lady and Child, the twelve Apostles and other saints.

The Tabernacle is a most striking piece of work, and one of the most remarkable of those elaborate sacred vessels which are to be met with in the Belgian

churches. Richly carved, with groups of pinnacles, towering one above the other, it soars to a height of fifty feet. It dates from 1450, and is the work of Matthew de Layens.

In the first chapel is a picture of the 'Last Supper' by Dierick Bouts. This is the central panel of a triptych representing the institution of the Eucharist. The other panels, 'The Prophet Elijah in the Desert,' and the 'Passover in a Jewish Family,' are in the Berlin Museum, the two others, 'Abraham and Melchisedec' and the 'Manna in the Desert,' are at the Munich Gallery. The separation of this work has destroyed the purpose of the artist, but it is as well to study it as a whole by means of reproductions. The details of the triptych are well worth noting; the architecture of the Gothic room, the flooring, and the figure of the donor in the doorway. This church contains another example of Bouts's work in the triptych of the 'Martyrdom of St. Erasmus,' the patron saint of those suffering from internal diseases. The technique of this picture is remarkable, but the subject is extraordinarily gruesome. The naked body of the saint is extended on a platform, while his intestines are being driven through an abdominal incision. In another chapel there is a triptych representing the 'Descent from the Cross,' ascribed to Rogier van der Weyden. Its authenticity is doubted; if not by the master himself, it is probably by one of his school, and is a copy with alterations of the picture in the Escurial at Madrid.

St. Gertrude's, formerly the Abbey church, contains some beautifully carved oak choir stalls, executed in

Louvain — South entrance of
Cathedral, with corner of
Town Hall

[illegible]. Richly carved [illegible] groups of [illegible], [illegible] one above the other, [illegible] in a [illegible] of [illegible]. [illegible] the work of [illegible] de [illegible].

In the [illegible] chapel is a [illegible] of the 'Last Supper,' by [illegible]. [illegible] the central panel of a [illegible] of the Eucharist. [illegible] in the Desert,' and [illegible] are in the [illegible] [illegible] and [illegible] gallery. [illegible] of [illegible] [illegible] worth [illegible] the flooring, and the [illegible] of the doorway. This church contains another example of Bouts's work in the triptych of the 'Martyrdom of St. Erasmus,' the patron saint of those suffering from internal diseases. The [illegible] of this picture is remarkable, but the subject is [illegible]. The naked body of the saint is [illegible] on a platform, while the [illegible] are being [illegible] [illegible]. In another chapel [illegible] the '[illegible] from the Cross,' [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] by the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible], the [illegible] church contains [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] executed in

1540 by Mathieu de Waeyer by order of the superior of the church, Peine Was, eldest son of Peine Was, the burgomaster of Brussels in 1486.

North-east of Louvain on the river Demer stands the town of Aerschot, the railway junction for Maestricht. There is an old fort here called Aurelian's Tower. The parish church, dating from 1336, contains some finely carved choir stalls and a rood-screen of the fifteenth century. Here was buried the wife of Quentin Matsys, who is said to have presented to her memory the chandelier which hangs in front of the rood-loft in the choir of the church.

BRUSSELS

CHAPTER IX

BRUSSELS

ONE of the earliest references to Brussels occurs at the end of the sixth century, when the hermitage of St. Géry, Bishop of Cambrai, is mentioned as standing on an island in the Senne, a tributary of the Scheldt. Here a small settlement sprang up, which derived its name from *selle* 'habitation,' and *broeck* 'marsh,' and a century later it was identified as the place of St. Vindicien's death. Charles, Duke of Lower Lotharinga, had his castle in the tenth century near this chapel of St. Géry, which was then the centre of a small town. To-day it is marked by the *Place St. Géry*.

During the next hundred years the town expanded into a place of importance. The citadel, town hall, and parish church of St. Gudule were enclosed within stone walls by Lambert, Count of Louvain, while he and other princes built for themselves châteaux on the eastern hill overlooking the Senne.

When Godfrey of Bouillon went forth to the East on the First Crusade in 1096, he was accompanied by many knights and citizens of Brussels. For upwards of four years no tidings had been received of the expedition, and it was feared that none would return. But on January 19, 1101, a watchman at one of the city gates saw a small party of men advancing to the sound of

trumpets, and it proved to be all that remained of the crusaders. They were received with great joy, and a banquet was at once prepared for their entertainment, but the husbands are said to have lingered so long over their wine, that the wives carried them off to bed on their shoulders.

Some two centuries later, when the Counts of Louvain had assumed the titles of Dukes of Brabant, flourished Duke John I., a notable figure as a ruler, soldier, knight-errant, and poet. He was himself victorious in no less than seventy tourneys. This romantic knight always welcomed the troubadours at his court, and assisted in their contests. As a ruler he was wise and humane, and gained for himself laurels at the Battle of Woeringen on the Rhine, the most decisive victory in the history of Brabant. In order to carry on his campaigns he obtained funds, to the extent of a twentieth of the property of the citizens of Brussels and Louvain, in return for certain privileges.

Duke John met his death in 1299 at Champagne in a tourney, and his body was carried to Brussels, where it was interred in the church of the Franciscans.

During the reign of his successor, John II., the privileges, so prized by the citizens of Brussels, were in danger of being forfeited. The ruling power had gradually passed into the hands of the wealthy classes, who were supported by the duke. The contest culminated in a battle fought in the Vilvorde meadows, in which the artisans met with defeat, but they thereupon retaliated by stopping supplies of money. Duke John, like our king of that name, was forced to give them a

charter, that of Cortemberg, upon which the rights of the Belgian people to this day are founded. The next duke, John III., was an ally of Edward III. of England, who made him his lieutenant-captain for France. About the year 1349 the terrible pestilence of the Black Death visited Brussels, as it did other towns of Europe, and carried off a large proportion of the population, including Duke John's two sons. John died in 1355 without male issue and left his dominions to his daughter Joan, the wife of Wenceslas of Luxemburg, whose father, the blind King of Bohemia, had met his death at the battle of Crécy.

With the continued growth of Brussels its prosperity was further consolidated by the activities of the wealthy merchant classes, who formed themselves into guilds. By this time Brussels had attained to the proud position of the largest town in the duchy, and the favourite place of residence of the rulers, though Louvain still continued to rank as the capital.

In 1356 there was a war of short duration between Wenceslas, Duke of Brabant, and Louis de Maele, Count of Flanders, which resulted, after a victory for the Flemings, in their final defeat. The hero of this conflict was Everard T'Serclaes, a member of one of the seven noble families of Brussels. While the town was in the hands of the Flemings T'Serclaes with some trusty followers, on the night of October 24, 1356, scaled the city wall, and killing the guard at the Hôtel de Ville, called up the citizens with the rousing appeal 'Brabant for the Great Duke.' The cry met with an immediate response, and the Flemish garrison, which

had been in occupation for only two months, was put to the sword. By this victory Wenceslas recovered Brussels and the rest of Brabant except Malines, and the Flemings were driven out of the country. T'Serclaes was not only knighted by the duke in recognition of his brilliant services, but he won the esteem of the patrician class, originally opposed to him, and attained several high civic appointments. Thirty-three years after his great achievement, T'Serclaes met his death in a violent manner, from the hand of a man who had been worsted by him in a legal claim. The knight was waylaid one evening on a road in the outskirts of the town, his tongue was cut out and one of his feet severed. He died ten days later in Brussels and was buried in the church at Ternath.

One of the results of this war with Flanders led to the developing the streets of Brussels, in the making of new fortifications, and the reconstruction of the moats and walls of the town, which latter were furnished with seven gates and protected with a large number of towers. A disastrous fire devastated the city in the year 1405, and destroyed more than four thousand houses, which once more necessitated a considerable amount of rebuilding. After the union of Brabant with the possessions of Philip le Bon, Duke of Burgundy, in 1430, the town gradually became the real capital of the Low Countries, with the chief palace of the ruling dukes. Charles V. frequently lived here, and revived the splendours of the court of Burgundy.

Early in the sixteenth century Brussels had grown into a town of 45,000 inhabitants, and in 1561 the

Aerschot — Water Gate

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canal which still connects it with the Scheldt was constructed. Philippe II. and his successors neglected Brussels where they were represented by governors-general: this period included that of Alva's reign of terror in the Spanish Netherlands. Brussels suffered bombardment by Villeroi in 1695, during the wars of Louis XIV., and four thousand houses and beautiful buildings were destroyed. Much of the town was then rebuilt in the years that followed; and in the middle of the following century, under the reign of Maria Theresa, the high town underwent many alterations, including the old palace and park; the Place Royale was also constructed, and some of the fine streets which exist to-day were planned. During the French Revolution Brussels was the seat of government, and finally, when Belgium became independent of Holland, it was constituted the royal capital. The fortifications round the town were levelled in 1818, and formed into promenades.

Brussels, as we see it to-day, gives one, on the whole, the impression of a thriving modern city, a typical capital, with fine streets and handsome modern buildings. The Brussels that Thackeray visited seventy years ago, and viewed with condescension, was also the Villette of Charlotte Brontë. 'The park,' he says, 'is very pretty, and all the buildings round about it have an air of neatness—almost stateliness. The houses are tall, the streets spacious, and the roads extremely clean. In the park is a little theatre, a café somewhat ruinous, a little palace for the king of this little kingdom, some smart public buildings (with S.P.Q.B. emblazoned

on them, at which pompous inscription one cannot help laughing), and other rows of houses somewhat resembling a little Rue de Rivoli. Whether from my own natural greatness and magnanimity, or from that handsome share of national conceit that every Englishman possesses, my impressions of this city are anything but respectful. It has an absurd kind of Lilliput look with it'; and so on.

In 1844, when these words were written, Belgium, after many years of suffering, had not long emerged as an independent kingdom. Her neutrality having been assured by the Powers, she had, till August 1914, enjoyed eighty-four years of peaceful prosperity, during which period Brussels steadily developed into a charming capital city. One gets rather tired of hearing it described as a miniature Paris, and Thackeray, as we see, did not disdain the comparison. It is true that there are the boulevards, the shops, and the park, but the description is not altogether just, for such an impression will easily be dispelled by leaving the boulevards and the Montagne de la Cour, the fashionable French quarter of the upper town, and descending to the *basse ville*. Here its Flemish character is evident, and the Flemish language will be heard a good deal, for it is generally used by the people in these narrow streets of old houses. This quarter, with its mediæval buildings, gives Brussels its distinctive note, which, with its picture galleries, constitute the chief attractions of the city from an historical point of view.

The river Senne, on the banks of which Brussels was originally built, is a small tributary of the Scheldt,

which has now been vaulted over, and its course in the city is covered by the inner boulevards.

Whether one visits Brussels for the first time, or returns to it, one is instinctively drawn to the Grand' Place. Here a view of the finest mediæval square in Europe is disclosed. The noble Hôtel de Ville, with its graceful spire, is the most conspicuous object, and the other ancient buildings in the Place are in keeping with its character. There is nothing fairer of its kind in Brussels, or indeed in Belgium. Sieges, conflagrations, and the requirements of a growing city have necessitated the rebuilding of the greater part of Brussels; but the Grand' Place has escaped the hand of time, to remind us of the mediæval glory of the city, and to recall some of the events in its history. It was here, in the spring of 1568, that the Duke of Alva, the scourge of Flanders (who had been sent by Philip II. of Spain to suppress the revolt of the Netherlands), ordered the execution of twenty-five noblemen, among whom were Lamoral, Count Egmont, and Philip de Montmorency, Count Hoorne. Originally a marsh, the Grand' Place was given its present name in 1380.

The Hôtel de Ville, the most beautiful building in Brussels, and one of the finest town halls in Brabant, is in the middle-decorated-Gothic styles. Erected between the years 1402 and 1448, it occupies one entire side of the Place. The east portion is the earlier, and is said to have been the work of Jacob van Thienen. The architect of the west end (slightly different in character and not so wide as the older part) was Jan van Ruysbroeck, whose statue is to be

seen in the first niche in the tower, which rises from the centre of the building. In form an irregular quadrangle, it encloses a court, and the ground floor in front consists of a colonnade of Gothic arches, and above two rows of windows. A large gateway occupies the lowest portion of the tower, above which are St. Michael (the patron saint of Brussels), with St. Sebastian, St. Christopher, St. George, and St. Géry. The tower is square in form to the fourth story and the top of the large sloping roof of the hall; the open spire which rises from this point is supported by four pinnacles with flying buttresses, and takes an octagonal form in three diminishing stages to a height of 370 feet. The spire carries a great gilt metal figure of St. Michael over sixteen feet high, set up in the year 1454. From the top of the tower a fine view of the town and adjacent country may be obtained: those who wish to see the plain of Waterloo, without the trouble of visiting it, may have the famous battle-field pointed out to them if the weather is favourable.

The Town Hall contains a number of historical pictures by modern artists; the Salle de Mariages is hung with tapestry, some Belgian of the fifteenth and Gobelin of the seventeenth centuries.

On the side of the Grand' Place facing the Hôtel de Ville stands the handsome and interesting Maison du Roi, formerly used as the Maison du Pain, or Broodhuis. Originally dating from between 1514 and 1525, it was badly restored in the eighteenth century; the house was pulled down in 1877 and rebuilt according to the first design, late florid Gothic and

Renaissance. On the ground floor there are eight large early pointed windows, with a doorway in the centre corresponding with them. The two stories above consist of sixteen windows, and those on the second floor all open on to a gallery. The high roof contains projecting windows, and a lofty open tower and lantern. It was here that the Counts Egmont and Hoorne spent their last night, and they passed to their place of execution by means of a planking from the balcony of the house. Their two statues stand in the square opposite the Palais d'Arenberg, the residence of Count Egmont.

The fine old Guild-houses of the city corporations in the Place were rebuilt at the beginning of the eighteenth century, having been badly damaged by Villeroi during the bombardment of Brussels in 1695. On the north side, in the Rue de la Tête d'or, is 'Le Reynard,' the house of the Silk-mercers and Haberdashers, which contains panels richly carved with designs symbolical of the trade. Then there are the houses of the Boatmen ('La Maison Cornet'), built in 1697; the Archers at the Wolfe (La Louve), with a group of Romulus and Remus being suckled by the wolf; La Brouette, the house of the Carpenters; Le Sac, the Printers; the Butchers, with a swan over the door; the Brewers (Brasseurs), surmounted with an equestrian statue by Jacquet of Prince Charles of Lorraine, governor of the Netherlands, 1741-1780. The south-east side is occupied by the Maison des Duc, formerly used for the office of Weights and Measures. It is heavily gilt, and in the late Renaissance style.

The Cathedral, dedicated to St. Michael, the archangel, and St. Gudule, was founded by Lambert II., Count of Lorraine, and consecrated in the year 1047, having been built on what was previously known as the Mont St. Michael. The patroness St. Gudule, who died in 712, was a nun in the convent at Nivelles, under her aunt, the Abbess Gertrude. It was the habit of St. Gudule to rise early and walk to a distant church in order to pray, and she carried a lantern to guide her footsteps. This was frequently put out by Satan, who wanted to lead her astray, but his efforts were without avail, for through the power of her prayers her lamp was relit. St. Gudule is therefore often represented carrying her lantern, which Satan endeavours to extinguish. Her relics were transferred to this new church, having originally been brought to Brussels from Morseel seventy years earlier by Charles of Lorraine.

Later the church was rebuilt on more imposing lines; the work was started about 1220. The Early Gothic portion, consisting of the choir, the south transept, the arcades of the nave, was finished by 1273. Portions of the north transept and the vaultings of the nave belong to the years between 1350 and 1450. The west end has a gable with a large window and two unfinished towers, which were built in the sixteenth century, about the year 1518. The whole building was restored during the middle of the nineteenth century. The external appearance of the building is remarkable; two towers are seldom met with in Belgium churches, and these are of handsome proportions. The west entrance is

approached from the street by a wide flight of steps completed in 1861, and above the door are figures of the twelve apostles. The choir aisles of St. Gudule, like the nave, formerly contained chapels, but between the years 1534 to 1630 these bays were converted on each side into large single chapels, and dedicated to the Blessed Virgin and St. Sacramente des Miracles. The plan of the church is that of a nave with eight bays or chapels, including those which are covered in with the towers.

The hexagonal Chapel of the Magdalen at the east end is an inappropriate addition of the eighteenth century. From this point a good view may be obtained of the thirteenth-century choir. The stained-glass windows belong to various dates from the thirteenth to the nineteenth century. But to see the Cathedral at its best is to look at it from the outside.

The pulpit, a vast piece of woodcarving by Verbruggen, was originally in the Jesuits' church at Louvain; and on the suppression of that order in Belgium it was presented to St. Gudule's by Maria Theresa. Thackeray pokes some fun at these absurd pulpits, of which the Belgian people seem to be so fond. 'In the matter of sculpture,' he says, 'almost all the Belgian churches are decorated with the most laborious wooden pulpits, which may be worth their weight in gold, too, for what I know, including the reverence preaching inside. At St. Gudule the preacher mounts into no less a place than the garden of Eden, being supported by Adam and Eve, by Sin and Death, and

numberless other animals; he walks up to his desk by a rustic railing of flowers, fruits, and vegetables, with wooden peacocks, parakeets, monkeys biting apples, and many more of the birds and beasts of the field. In another church the clergyman speaks from out a hermitage; in a third from a carved palm-tree, which supports a set of oak clouds that form the canopy of the pulpit, and are, indeed, not much heavier in appearance than many huge sponges. A priest, however tall or stout, must be lost in the midst of all these queer gimcracks; in order to be consistent, they ought to dress him up, too, in some odd fantastical suit. I can fancy the curé of Meudon preaching out of such a place, or the Rev. Sydney Smith, or that famous clergyman of the time of the League, who brought all Paris to laugh and listen to him.'

In the fourteenth century, when the persecution of Jews was regarded as legitimate, the following incident occurred in Brussels. It is related that on the Good Friday of 1370 sixteen consecrated Hosts were stolen from the Cathedral by the Jews, who conveyed them to their synagogue. The thieves sacrilegiously pierced the Hosts with knives, whereupon they miraculously bled. The Jews then became frightened and returned the consecrated wafers to the Cathedral, but they were ultimately detected, and some were burnt alive, while others were banished the country for ever. Their synagogue was destroyed and an expiatory chapel reared on its site. The miraculous Hosts are still preserved in the Cathedral, where they are exhibited once a year on the Sunday after 15th July.

Brussels — Grande Place

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Some of the windows in the Cathedral commemorate this miracle of the Hosts. Those in the south aisle depict the theft of the Hosts, the miracle of the Blood, and their recovery. In the north aisle, the return of the Hosts to the church and their miraculous powers, are represented. The chapel in the north transept, dedicated to the Holy Sacrament, was erected in honour of the Stolen Hosts, the story of which is told in the beautiful old windows.

Some way south of the Cathedral lies the Chapelle de l'Expiation, which was erected in 1436 on the site of the synagogue where the sacred Hosts were profaned. The church is chiefly interesting in connection with St. Gudule, and has been recently restored; the flamboyant Gothic interior is decorated with mural paintings by G. Payen, and the apse contains some modern stained-glass windows.

Two other churches in Brussels are well worthy of attention. Especially so is the mediæval Notre Dame de la Chapelle, which was founded by Godefroid-le-Barbu, Duke of Brabant in 1134. 'The present Gothic building was begun in 1216; the choir and transept only, however, belong to this period. The exterior has been much restored. The choir and transept are valuable as specimens of the Transitional and Early Pointed period of architecture, so rare in the cities of Brabant. The church then represents an interesting variety of styles, the crossing and the transepts being an adaptation of Romanesque and First Pointed, the aisles and choir First Pointed, and the nave a very fine specimen of fifteenth-century work. Originally there was a

central tower, but when the present nave was built the upper part of the tower was taken down, the lower part made to range in height with the new clerestory and one long line of roof carried along the whole. The south transept and the choir are the most interesting portions of Notre Dame de la Chapelle externally, but their true dimensions appear dwarfed by the nave, whose aisle walls reach to the spring of the transept gable.'[1] The present tower is placed at the west end of the nave, the stone portion of which rises only slightly above the nave and is finished with a belfry.

The high altar was designed by Rubens. The church contains some good pictures by seventeenth- and eighteenth-century painters.

The Church of Notre Dame des Victoires, also called Notre Dame du Sablon, was founded in the year 1304 by the Corporation of Archers to commemorate the victory of John I. of Brabant at the battle of Woerington in 1288 over the court of Gwelders and the Archbishop. With the exception of the doorway of the north transept, which belongs to the fourteenth century, the church was built almost entirely during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The interior has been restored and cleared of unnecessary objects. The west front is remarkable for the deep recess of the portal; for the beautiful window above with its delicate tracery, and for the two massive turrets which rise on each side of the door. The aisles have the appearance externally of being divided into seven bays, but there are really only five, the two bays at the west

[1] *The Cathedral and Churches of Belgium*, by T. Francis Bumpus.

end being thrown into one and marked off from the others by an arch.

The church contains a rose window, which is seldom found in a Belgian church. The mortuary chapel of the Princes of Thurn and Taxis is on the left of the altar, faced with black marble and decorated with statuettes in alabaster. A similar chapel, erected in 1690 on the right of the altar, contains the mausoleum of Count Flaminid Garnier, secretary to the Duke of Parma. Over the altar is a white marble figure of St. Ursula by H. Duquesnoy. The nave is ornamented with the figures of the twelve Apostles. In the choir there are mural paintings of Saints exactly reproducing the original frescoes, of the fifteenth century, which were disclosed here in a ruined condition in 1860, also some early stained-glass windows, as well as some of modern workmanship of great merit. The nave, aisles and west tower are later, and were completed in 1483. The modern sculpture over the west door represents the Trinity accompanied with angels and Our Lady. Above the southern door there is an ancient relief of the Coronation of Our Lady. The nave is supported by some fine round pillars, with figures of the twelve Apostles, but otherwise the interior bears signs of restoration. The elaborately carved pulpit, representing Elijah in the wilderness, with palms, etc., is evidently one of those spoken of by Thackeray.

The only remaining ancient gateway belonging to the fortifications of Brussels is the Port de Hal, a massive stone stronghold built in 1381. It was used

as a prison during the domination of Alva in the Netherlands, and is now fitted up as a museum of armory.

The Palais de Justice is one of the sights of modern Brussels. This gigantic building, in the Græco-Roman style, is probably the largest court of justice in the world. It is impressive on account of its stupendous dimensions, and the domed tower dominates the quarter of Brussels in which it stands at a height of 400 feet.

The Brussels Picture Gallery is an imposing modern building, in which the magnificent collection of old and modern masters is displayed in spacious, well-lighted rooms. The modern pictures and sculpture are noteworthy, but we shall confine ourselves to some remarks on the works of the older Flemish painters.

We will begin with Roger van der Weyden on account of his association with Brussels. He was a native of Tournai, as we have already mentioned; the date of his birth is supposed to have occurred about the year 1400. He married a lady of his native town and in 1432 took the freedom of his Guild. Four years later he was settled at Brussels as 'Town-painter.' Crowe does not support the suggestion that he was a pupil of Jan van Eyck, as he thinks that Van der Weyden's work is the result of a training different to that taught by the artists of Maaseyck. He evidently did not refuse commissions for colouring sculpture, for his most characteristic pictures bear some resemblance to bas-reliefs, and the curved portals with the fretted ornaments which enclose them are carefully copied from

the architecture of his period. Apparently little or none of his early work has survived, and much of his most important work has been removed from the town halls and churches, for which it was executed. His earliest religious picture to which a date can be fixed was in a Spanish monastery in 1445. This work, in which he represents the 'Nativity, the Lamentation of Our Lady over the body of Christ, and the Resurrection,' is now in the Berlin Gallery. Later he composed a 'Descent from the Cross' for a church in Louvain, which was subsequently sent to Spain. In 1449 Van der Weyden went to Italy, where his work was viewed with admiration. On his return to Brussels he devoted some years of his life to his art, but in 1462 he and his wife withdrew from the world to a religious institution. He died in 1464 and was buried in the Cathedral at Brussels.

In the Brussels collection there are three panels attributed to Van der Weyden, representing scenes in the life of Our Lady. The subject of the centre panel on the left is the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple. In the foreground at the foot of the steps are St. Joachim and St. Anna, the parents of the child Mary, who is being led up the steps by an angel only a little taller than herself. Through the open door of the Temple can be seen the High Priest. On the right the Annunciation—in a Flemish house, a side of the wall being removed to allow us to see the Virgin, who kneels at a prie-dieu; in the background is the angel, also kneeling. The second panel on the left represents the Circumcision, and the third on the right,

Christ among the doctors. In both of these panels there are some excellent details—the figures and faces of the people in the backgrounds and the architecture are well worth studying. There are also two fine portraits by Van der Weyden (formerly the wings of a triptych) of the father and mother of Charles V., Johanna of Spain and Phillippe le Beau. And yet another portrait by this master of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy. He wears the order of the *Golden Fleece* and holds an arrow in his hand.

The two wings, representing Adam and Eve, belonging to Van Eyck's triptych of the 'Adoration of the Lamb,' have been described in the chapter on Ghent. They are very faithful and almost realistic studies from the nude, unidealised and from indifferent models, but they are unattractive, except from point of view of technique.

The 'Adoration of the Magi,' now supposed to be the work of Gerard David, was formerly attributed to Jan van Eyck. The Virgin, seated at the side of the manger in a ruined temple, has a beautiful face, which is altogether more natural than the conventional Madonnas of the early Flemish painters. The other figures in the picture, the kings and St. Joseph, are also less stiff in their attitudes.

Memlinc's portraits are only second, in point of interest, to his religious compositions. Attention has already been drawn (in Bruges) to his studies of William Moreel and his wife in the St. Christopher triptych. Admirable portraits of these two worthies are to be seen in the Brussels collection. There is also a fine

triptych, formerly attributed to Memlinc, but now no longer ascribed to that master. The central panel is the 'Crucifixion, with Our Lady and St. John standing on either side of the Cross.' Below, in the foreground, kneel Francesco Sforza in armour (for whose family the work was painted in Italy), his wife Bianca Visconti, and their son Galeazzo Maria. The left panel is the 'Nativity, and below St. Francis (patron of Francesco) and St. Bavon with a falcon.' In the right panel, above is St. John the Baptist, and below St. Catherine with sword and wheel, and St. Barbara with her tower.

We have already referred to some of the work of Dierick Bouts at Louvain, and here are two panels (generally considered his masterpiece), illustrating the story of the justice of the Emperor Otho. It is one of crime and vengeance. The Empress, in the absence of her husband in Italy, made advances to a courtier, who rejected them. On the Emperor's return, the lady denounced the courtier, who was forthwith decapitated. But Otho seems to have had misgivings as to the guilt of the dead man, and summoned the Empress to appear before him with the head. This she does, holding in her hand, without sustaining any injury to herself, a bar of red-hot iron to prove her innocence. The Emperor declares her guilty on account of this miracle, and orders her to be burnt alive. Two other pictures by this master — both very characteristic and worth careful study — the 'Martyrdom of St. Sebastian' and the 'Last Supper': the latter should be carefully compared with the

'Last Supper' by Bouts in Louvain; in this work the architecture of the room is Gothic, in the Brussels picture Renaissance.

Quentin Matsys, the last of the old school of Flemish masters, is represented by a noble triptych—the Family of St. Anna. But the work of the Breughels, the father and son, constitutes a link between the old painters and the later Flemish school. They loved to depict the life of the people—country scenes, with groups of homely folk, full of action and character, form the subjects of their canvases. Even in Pierre Breughel's painful picture of the 'Massacre of the Innocents,' he places the incident in a Flemish village with snow on the ground and on the high gabled houses. A similar winter scene is the 'Payment of the Tithe.' The frozen water and the tall leafless trees are excellent.

David Teniers, the younger, who married a daughter of Jan Breughel, carried on the traditions of delineating the peasant life of the Netherlands, and he perfected it. Whether it was a simple figure of a man smoking, or a group of Boers drinking, a festival, or a Flemish interior — he proved himself as one of the greatest of the school of *genre* painters. Teniers' beautiful golden and silver tones are inimitable. His best pictures are to be found in other collections, but he is represented in the Brussels Gallery by some good pictures, namely the 'Five Senses,' 'Consulting the Doctor,' the 'Gallery of the Archduke Leopold,' and the 'Temptation of St. Anthony.'

Rubens' 'Adoration of the Magi' is the finest of

his works to be seen here. It is rich in colouring and masterly in composition. His 'Venus at the Forge of Vulcan' is an admirable study of the nude. There are also some others by him. The 'Coronation of the Virgin,' the 'Martyrdom of St. Lieven,' 'Christ on the Knees of Our Lady' and the 'Way to Calvary'; besides portraits of the Archduke Albert and of his wife the Infanta Isabella. The noble dash and energy of Rubens' manner are well exemplified in these works. But Antwerp is of course the place to see his best pictures.

The work of Van Coninxloo and Van Orley, both Brussels men, should not be neglected, nor should the curious paintings of processions by Antoine Sallaert. The later Flemish school of painting displays a wide variety of styles and interests. The wonderful architectural pictures of streets and interiors of churches and other buildings by E. de Witte always excite my interest. Another kind of work in which the Flemish excelled is, of course, still-life. There are some good specimens of the flower and fruit pieces of Van Weenix and de Heem, and still-life by Hondecoeter. The gallery also contains some representative work of the Dutch school, Rembrandt, Frans Hals, Gerard Dou, Ostade Jan Steen, etc.

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